/114/

121 I shall describe to you in the following some aspects of the social structure of the same Indian tribe whose conceptions about the soul Herr Dr. Zerries has just discussed. The title, "Sociology," is too presumptuous, insofar as today I intend to deal with only the larger social units and thus touch upon only a small sector of the sociological field. I shall be able to present to you only raw expedition-material; the comparative arrangement of these data in South American cultural history will be the work of the next few months.

101 131 The Waika /Waica/ inhabit the upper Orinoco river region in southern Venezuela; their area of habitation, however, is not limited by the Sierra Parima, in which the Orinoco rises and which forms the mountain border with Brazil, but rather extends into Brazilian soil far beyond this mountain chain, about to the middle of the northern tributaries of the Rio Negro and Rio Branco. [161] The Sierra Parima therefore is more the backbone of the living space of this Indian group, which, according to the best estimates, contains about fifty thousand persons and an area of about half 137 the size of West Germany. According to external appearances, [132] this region is counted as tropical rain forest; seasonal differences are only slight and are practically without influence on the life 101 and culture of the people. The critical cultural importance of the 170 forest lies in its isolating effect: between the habitation area of [137] the Waika and the first mixed settlement there extends an almost [487] uninhabited forest-belt several hundred kilometers wide, and since there is very little river traffic and as other means of transportation there are only onerously traversable Indian paths, the culture of the Waika has been able to remain almost completely pure. Only a [Fam.] few material things from our world have as yet found their way to them: a few machetes and axes, a few matches and fishhooks, which an American mission working from 1947 to 1955 under very difficult conditions and we ourselves brought along, since the Waika do not maintain any contacts of their own downriver, however, the barely begun acculturation process does not go on /115/ by itself, but ebbs away the moment the visiting whites leave Waika country.

/115 cont./

101 (191)

Thus the geographic situation of the Waika and their extremely limited contact with civilization are depicted in a few words. Because the name is simple and well-known, I have so far spoken only of the "Waika," but now it is time to make a more precise distinction when first we turn to the question of tribal organization. On Venezuelan soil this people is divided into three large groups, all of whom, disregarding slight differences, speak the same language and have the same culture. The Shidishana /Shiriana/ live north of the Ocamo, a northern tributary of the upper Orinoco; to the north their territory is bordered by the Cariban Makiritare, with whom the Shidishana have in many ways entered into a close economic and social symbiosis. Adjacent to the Shidishana on the south are the Waika proper (the name means "killer"); they inhabit the region between Ocamo and Orinoco and with a few of their villages extend over to the southern Orinoco bank. The large and completely unexplored region south of the Orinoco to the Brazilian border and beyond, however, belongs, at least in its northern part, to the Shamatairi /Samatari/, the "tapir people," who are one of the most primitive groups of this people, stand strictly inimically opposed to any contact, and thus do not show even the slight traces of acculturation that the Waika do. As far as I can see, there is no reliable information available concerning the population groups east of the Sierra Parima, and unquestionably the picture for the Venezuelan area from whose northeastern part another group, named Okomatairi, has been reported will be improved later. The terms Waika and Shidishana (or Shiriana) used in the literature as a collective designation for these culturally similar virgin-forest groups are not very suitable, since they refer to subgroups; on the other hand, the name Guaharibo used by foreigners does not belong to the language of this people and is recognized only by the Shidishana. The only name that encompasses all the subgroups and is understood by the natives themselves as a general term is the word "Yanoama," which means "voice of the house" and contrasts with "nabe," by which all foreigners are meant indiscriminately -- all who do not speak

342 /14 cont./
592 Under these windscreens the families live, one beside the other. The space for each family amounts to three to four meters. In the center burns the fire, which is kept going day and night.
354 To the right and left of it hangs a hammock each for the man
352 and the woman (Ill. 29). In the case of larger families, the
592 hammocks are hung around the fire in a triangle and, if neces-
342 sary, one above the other. In the latter case, the chief wife always sleeps below and the man above, while the second wife and the older children, or the grandmother, lie in the hammocks
353 on the opposite side of the fire. Above and behind the hammocks
342 the implements, bows, arrows, quivers, knives, baskets, etc., are hung on the roof framework. In addition, most families
231 have a square or rectangular wooden framework set up far in the
342 background, which is about one meter high, one-half to at most one meter long, and is provided with side walls 30 to 50 centimeters high, in which the young dogs sleep, the so-called
[174] dog-bed (Ill. 30). Whether this arrangement is indigenous or was taken over from Karaiben /Carib/ tribes some time in the past could not as yet be determined. According to a statement
[171] by the German Franciscan monk, Protasius Frikel, of Santarem, similar dog-beds are also in use among the Karaiben tribes on the Rio Trombetas (53).

53. Personal statement by P. Frikel on the occasion of the XXXI. Int. Amerik. Kongr. in São Paulo, 1954.

342 The chief's hut obviously owes its origin to the model of the
622 huts of the planters, and rubber and palm-fiber gatherers. It
[177] has a rectangular ground plan, the broad side is turned toward the courtyard, and it is also open on this side. The length is 9.70 meters, the width six meters, and the height, exactly the same as the windscreens, about six meters. In the center stand four posts five meters long, at both the front and back four smaller ones, each of which is 2.55 meters high. The small

/16 cont./

342 In the building method described by me, however, the
174 circular ground-plan is retained, in spite of the three center posts.
• 177 According to Koch-Grünberg, the gable roofs and huts with elliptical
ground-plan and others of a square shape owe "their origin obvi-
[114] ously to European influence" (57). On this point I am in com-

57. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 22.

plete agreement with the above-mentioned investigator and therefore believe that this maloka built by the Surára, which they modeled after the community house of the Xiriána, actually developed from the Karaiben conical-roofed hut, while the roof represents a borrowing from the civilized world (palm-straw huts of the caboclos). This is also indicated by the construction of the chief's hut within the periphery of the large, open maloka,
[184] which likewise has a gable roof (see p. 29). It is noteworthy, however, that the maloka of the Surára has a height of ten meters, while the round huts mentioned by Koch-Grünberg show
342 a height between 4.20-5.57 meters (58). My question as to why
825

58. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 21.

the Surára in the sierra occupy an open maloka and on the Cachoeira dos Índios on the upper Aracá a closed one was answered to the effect that in the higher, cooler region between Demini and Aracá there are practically no mosquitoes, whereas there are relatively many along the riverbank of the Aracá. This explanation is very plausible, for in the closed community-houses of the Indians there are no gnats. They avoid the semidarkness and the smoke of the constantly burning fire.

2. Bridges

501 Boats are not used by the Surára and Pakidái. When, on
484 their narrow forest paths which are scarcely discernible to our
491 eyes, they come to brooks, they simply wade across. In the case of wider brooks which are greatly swollen during the rainy

Surára
Pakidái

/34 cont./

292 191 The neighboring Wapixana /Wapishana/ men (Aruak) /Arawak/, moreover, wear a very similar belt and attach to it a pubic band which is drawn between the legs (175).

175. Farabee, 1918, p. 29.

(648) (179) Since the Surára and Pakidái waged many wars with the Makuxí (the father of the Surára chief Hewemão is even supposed to have been killed by a Makuxí warrior), it would be entirely possible that they took over from this Karaiben /Carib/ tribe the form of the plaited, wide, flat belt, but then used it, not as men's, but as women's clothing.

179 292 194 184 The little fringed apron so typical for the Puseheweterí and Karimé women was also surely copied from Karaiben models, which, in turn, could have been borrowed from the Aruak, for Farabee confirms it also for Wapixana and Mapidian /Maopityan/ girls (176). According to Roth, a woven, red-dyed belt, the lower

292 191

176. Farabee, 1918, Pl. XXIX, A.

edge of which is fringed and, in addition, provided with three pendant tassels, is tied around young Makuxí and Wapixana girls on the occasion of their first menstruation. He designates this article of clothing as "apron belt" /cited in English/ (177). A

177. Roth, 1924, p. 437.

dyed belt provided with fringe is likewise documented for the Maiongkong (178) (179) and, /35/ according to Roth, resembles

178. R. H. Schomburgk, 1841, p. 215.

179. Richard Schomburgk, 1847, pp. 402/03.

000 the above-mentioned apron-belt (180). When Koch-Grünberg saw

180. Roth, 1924, p. 444.

Surara
Pakidái
Puseheweterí

292 /35 cont./ When Koch-Grünberg saw
174 Xiriána women dressed in a little fringed apron (181), he had
●179

181. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 305 and Plates 45, 48 (4, 5).

reason to suspect that they may have taken over and preserved the ancient dress of the Maiongkong (Yekuaná) women. Thus, he writes: "They, too, were surely not originally peculiar to these Indians, for some of them wore the little apron up on their stomachs, on others it had slipped down halfway to the knees" (182).

182. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 305, footnote 1, and p. 306.

Comparative investigations show that the cotton belts of the Surára, Pakidái, and Puseheweterí reached them from the outside, that is, directly from the Karaiben or by way of the Xiriána (183), along with cotton. With regard to the way they

183. According to Métraux, the Xiriána took over their dress from the Karaiben (Métraux, 1948, p. 863).

291 With regard to the way they
292 were worn and the use they were put to, however, there followed
174 a transformation process, which is very informative. That is, when, on the basis of the statements in the literature, I had traced in my dissertation all the motives that might have induced the South American primitive peoples to tie on belts and hip cords, the result was as follows: "It has been possible to prove that the idea of adornment plays only a secondary role, as does the magical motive. The feeling of modesty is entirely eliminated as a cause, and also verification for a sexual stimulus is lacking. On the other hand, the investigations show that the belts and hip cords primarily have the purpose of protecting the genital organs from insects, thorns, etc. (as a holding device for the upward-placed penis, the uluri, the pubic aprons, etc.)" (184) (185).

184. Becher, 1951, p. 192.
185. Becher, 1955, p. 153.

2: Becher--91 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Surára
Pakidái

/42 cont./

304 824 386 412 377 The former use the juice of the genipap fruit as coloring matter, the latter the ashes of burned honey bees (229) /see footnote p. 90/. The original instrument everywhere for the puncturing of the dots was a palm thorn. Koch-Grünberg, however, also saw the use of pointed fragments of glass among the above-mentioned Karaiben (230).

230. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 45.

304 174 171 114 A decision about whether the tattooings in the mouth region developed independently among the aforementioned Yanonámi, Karaiben, and Aruak tribes or whether they were brought about by reciprocal or outside influences cannot be reached as yet, although Koch-Grünberg saw a young Xiriána woman who had the fishhook and dot tattooing of the Arekuná-Taulipang painted on her face (231). This may have been an exception, however,

231. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 305.

for, strangely enough, he did not find any further tattooing among the Xiriána.

179 The designs of the Surára and Pakidái also seem to be more primitive than the basic motifs of the Karaiben and Aruaken in the form of fishhooks, which clearly point to borrowings from civilization. Moreover, the fact that among the Karaiben tribes of Guiana individual men and boys are tattooed in the region of the mouth leads one to conclude that there has been a leveling of this custom. For probably there, too, it was formerly reserved for only the women, just as it is today among the Surára and Pakidái.

In conclusion, reference is to be made to P. Schmidt and Nordenskiöld, from whom there are already available brief, summary studies about puncture-tattooing in South America. The first-named author differentiates two groups, which are reserved for men and women or only for women, respectively, and regards a western origin as probable (232). /43/ On the other

/49 cont./

285 462 [824] More highly developed is the carrying basket which consists of bast strips of the curauá plant (Ananas sativus Sch.) -- uaramá. It is made by the male members of the tribe in the following manner: Two groups of plaiting strips are laid on top of each other in different directions and then interwoven with a third group of strips running in still another direction (Ill. 33).

285 174 [171] This, according to Max Schmidt's classification, is the third principal type of South American plaiting (272) (273). This type

272. Max Schmidt, 1904, pp. 490 ff.

273. Max Schmidt, 1905, pp. 330 ff.

of basket (274), which is very widespread in South America, is

274. Abundant comparative material is to be found in Roth (Roth, 1924, pp. 321 ff. and Pl. 100 B and 102) and Mason (Mason, 1904, pp. 529 ff. and Pl. 240 (1, 2).

also regarded as very old, but today is seldom used any more by the Surára and Pakidái. Nothing concerning its origin is known any more among the tribes named. An autochthonous development is possible, but an adoption from Karaiben or Aruak tribes, who use similar baskets, is more probable. The same basket is likewise confirmed for the related Karimé (275).

[179] [184]

275. Salathé, 1931/32, p. 302 and Figs. 9 and 10.

285 824 192 The one most frequently used at present is the women's large carrying-basket made of liana strips (276) -- wuéka --, which "has the shape of a somewhat elongated semicircle" (Ill. 34).

276. Each individual liana is split with the teeth into several flat strips. (Cf. also p. 101).

Surára
pakidái
Shiriana

252
184
285 /51 cont./

The tube-press -- pokunho -- has only recently gained entry among the Surára and Pakidái. Among the former I discovered only [192] three specimens, among the latter five, all of which /52/ /Fig. 22 appears here/ were made of bast strips of the curauá plant (Ananas sativus Sch.) and were relatively small (length, 1.10-[438] 1.20 meters; diameter, 3-4 centimeters). They were in the possession of a few families who had obtained them by barter [192] from the Xiriána. Heretofore the manioc pulp has been pressed out with the hand by means of small, square plaitings -- yorohí -- (290).

290. The name is practically identical with the one for the small basket with handle -- yorohikes -- and the plaiting technique is the same throughout.

[178] Even today this method is more common than the one with the tube-press, but the latter is gradually beginning to come in. [426] Families who do not as yet own a tube-press sometimes borrow one, for up to now it has been made neither by the Surára nor the 114 Pakidái. The above reference to the fact that the tube-press is 252 supposed to represent an import article from the Xiriána is 174 significant, however. That is, when Koch-Grünberg stayed with 285 a Xiriána group in Motomotó, he did not find any there, but only small basket-winnowers, in which the manioc pulp was squeezed [177] with the hand (291). Hence it is to be assumed that these Indians,

291. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 308.

too, have not known the tube-press for very long; presumably they took it over from the Karaiben. /Fig. 23 appears here./

Xiriâna
Surára
Pakidái

/55 cont./

412 knives are sometimes bound to a pointed wooden handle. This
184 strengthening, however, certainly was not added later, but rather is simply the shaft which the Xiriâna, unlike the Surára and Pakidái, mount on their arrow points (see p. 43).

412 For cutting hair and shearing off the tonsure, decidedly
462 women's work, a split piece of reed sharpened on one side
302 (taquara -- Guadua sp.) is used.

412 Such "knives" are also widespread among the South American
171 Indians; Prince zu Wied-Neuwied documents them for the Botokuden (307).

307. Prince zu Wied-Neuwied, 1821, p. 9.

412 Another important tool is the eyetooth from the lower jaw
237 of the wild pig -- manacoauâ --, with the inner edge of which the men smooth their bows.

[184] This tool is also used for the same purpose by the Waikâ (308).

308. Schuster, 1958b, p. 17.

412 For work in the fields the men use a digging stick somewhat
[192] flattened at the lower end and 2-2.20 centimeters long --
[824] namunamutehî --, which they make out of the hard wood of the pupunha palm (Guilielma speciosa Mart.); as a substitute they also occasionally use an old, broken bow-staff.

[184] Zerries also observed the latter practice among the Waikâ (309).

309. Zerries, 1956b, p. 153.

413 A piece of round wood from the trunk of the pupunha palm
462 should also be mentioned; it is used by the women as a bast beater -- xamotimâ (see also pp. 112/114).

412 This exhausts the use of primitive tools. Even in olden
197 times, there were certainly not many more. During my stay among the two tribes, however, I saw them already using steel axes, as well as terçados (large bush-knives) and small knives.

Surára
Pakidái
Shiriana

/75 cont./ According to their own statements, both tribes regard the Xiriâna as their culture-bearers in this case too. The latter, however, likewise merely adopted agriculture from their higher Karaiben neighbors (348).

348. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 307.

b) Hunting

The majority of Surára and Pakidái men are excellent hunters and practice their hunting with the large bows and arrows described above (see pp. 36 ff.), which they know how to handle masterfully. In addition, they know the habits of the animals precisely. They discover every trail of a wild animal, no matter how faint, sniff it, and announce the time when it was at this place. Often they then follow it for hours through the almost impenetrable forest; sometimes they are /76/ gone for several days. Moreover, they know how to attract the animals by imitative sounds.

There are two methods of hunting, the individual hunt -- larâ -- (349) and the collective hunt -- norâ -- (350). The latter, however, now takes place only before the great festival in memory of the dead (see pp. 224 ff.), in order to provide sufficient supplies of meat for it. Trained dogs are trusty helpers in hunting (see pp. 185ff.).

359. In this case, the hunter often takes his wife along (if he has two or more wives, the oldest usually accompanies him), who must carry the slain animal, or pieces of meat from it, into the maloka.

350. Among the Waikâ, too, there are these two hunting methods, and the names sound very similar there, "lama" and "henioma" (Zerries, 1956b, p. 151).

Of larger game the wild pig (Pecari tajacu) -- poxe -- is most often killed, and after that the tapir (Tapirus americanus Briss.) -- xâma -- and a deer species (Cervidae sp.) -- hajâ. The

Surára
Pakidái

/17 cont./

226 c) Fishing

Fishing plays a very subordinate part, and since olden times it has been carried on, with bow and arrow, only from the river-bank. Fishing by means of poison or landing nets, weirs, and similar implements is unknown. Recently, however, these Indians [179] have now and then used fishhooks of metal (354), which were

354. They fasten these to a line of cotton or Bromelia fibers.

given them by rubber and palm-fiber gatherers, as well as by the Indian protection post on the Rio Demini. Nevertheless, this 226 262 has not substantially increased their interest in fishing, for fish simply are not among their favorite foods. Moreover, only smaller species may be eaten (355), because all the large ones have the

355. Aracu (Leporinus copelandi Steind.), piranha (Pygocentrus sp. and Serrasalmus sp.), surubim (Platystoma sp.), jandiá (Sciluridae sp.), mandi (Rhamdia sp.), curimatá (Prochilodus sp.), pescada (Gadus sp.), dourado (Salmimus brevidens), tambaquí (Characinidae sp.), mandubi (Auchenipteridae sp.), anujá (Trachycoristes sp.), cuiú-cuiú (Oxidorus niger Vall.), etc.

evil breath of the river within them and thus cause sickness and other misfortune. Thus, they, of course, abhor the pirarucu (Osteoglossidae), over three meters long and the largest fresh-water fish, the dried meat of which represents practically the basic diet of the caboclo population (planters, rubber and palm-fiber gatherers), and the delicious meat of the large water-turtles is also rejected by them for this reason.

Surára
Pakidái

/82 cont./

252 especially of the tapir, the pieces are left on the rack until they are black and as hard as bone.

• [179] Smaller pieces of meat are cooked or boiled in clay vessels (392) and occasionally also in aluminum pots (393), often

[438] 392. These come from the Xiriána.

[439] 393. These are trade articles of the caboclos (planters, rubber and palm-fiber gatherers) or gifts from the Indian protection post on the Rio Demini.

together with green bananas, by the women. The pot is simply set between the burning logs. The women are very enthusiastic about my empty gasoline cans, in which they often cooked a whole cutia, paca, or monkey. Snake meat is eaten only in a cooked state. Fish are wrapped in leaves and steamed in the hot ashes.

/83/ Vegetables offer a variety of possibilities in the way of preparation. Bananas are predominantly roasted in hot ashes when they are still green, after the peeling has been removed beforehand (the taste always reminded me of a fresh roll), or cut into small pieces and boiled, in the latter case usually along with meat. A soup which is made out of ripe bananas is regarded as a special delicacy (394). Bananas are seldom eaten

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394. The banana in general and this soup in particular play an important role in the religious and social life of the Surára and Pakidái. Young men, during their training period as medicine-man helpers, must be satisfied with a banana as their daily diet (see p. 144). At the festival in memory of the dead such a soup, mixed with the bone ashes of deceased tribesmen, is drunk by the men (see p. 230). Young girls are permitted to eat banana soup as their sole

Suráre
Pakidái

/83 cont./

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262

394. (cont.)
nourishment during their first and second menstruation (see p. 142), and it represents the most important item of food for pregnant women, and for several months after confinement. Among the Tapirapé, on the other hand, where the banana also represents a basic part of the diet, parents must refrain from eating this fruit after a birth. "They believe that the child would die if they disregarded this rule" /cited in English/ (Baldus, 1956b, p. 601).

[171]

252 raw. -- The mealy, nourishing fruits of the pupunha palm are primarily boiled. Then the soup is allowed to cool and a refreshing drink is obtained in this way. Before festivals all the [415] women pour it into a large, wooden trough, which is found in every maloka, so that there will be enough on hand. By means of steaming or roasting, a solid food is also prepared from them (395). --

[114]
[137]

395. Alexander von Humboldt, by the way designates the pupunha or pihiguao palm as "Pfirsich-palme" /peach palm/ and praises the delicious taste of its fruit (Alexander von Humboldt, 1860, III, pp. 281 f., 300; IV, p. 145). I cannot agree with the great scholar in this, for to me it tasted like slightly bitter potatoes. Zerries, by the way, is of the same opinion (Zerries, 1956b, p. 148).

Taioba, carí, sweet potatoes, and sweet manioc are steamed in a pot or roasted in hot ashes without being previously washed or 252 peeled. -- Bitter manioc is scraped by the women with the 412 lancet-shaped bamboo knife (see p. 118) and then grated on a rough slab of granite, for they do not have grating boards (396) (397).

[177]
[123]

396. My servant Mateus, however, made them

Surára
Pakidái
Shiriana

/83 cont./

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412
[177]
[123]
[192]

396. (cont.)
a few graters out of the sides of our empty gasoline cans by boring numerous holes in them with a nail. They were very happy over these and maintained that it was considerably more agreeable to grate on them. They also immediately had a name for this grater -- kabaricinamó.

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397. The Xiriâna, too, grate the manioc rooti on rough slabs of granite (Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 308).

252 The grated pulp is then pressed out by hand with the help of small, square strips of plaiting (see p. 112), which are rolled up (398).

398. The poison is removed from the manioc pulp in the same way among the Xiriâna (Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 308).

Among the Surâra I found three tube presses and among the Pakidâi five, which they had obtained from the Xiriâna (see p. 112). With the flour the women bake, on large, flat granite stones under which a fire is kindled, manioc flat-cakes, which are consumed with pleasure. This food, which appeared among them only a comparatively short time ago, seems to become
273 more and more popular. The preparation of kaschirí is unknown (399).

[114]
[177]

399. Since, however, my servant, a pure-blooded Tukano /Tucano/ Indian, felt a great desire for a slight alcoholic intoxication at the sight of the manioc flat-cakes, he taught the Surâra how to make kaschirí. At first they tried this unknown drink very critically. But after the first swallow their eyes shone, and they slapped Mateus on the shoulder enthusiastically and assured him again and again how good it tasted to them.

Surára
Pakidái

/87 cont./

231 writes: "Whether the first hunter-gatherer hordes migrating to
174 America from northeastern and northern Asia by way of the Bering Strait brought the dog along has, apart from the Eskimo dog, not as yet been proved with certainty, even though it is probable. Whether the dogs of the New World can be traced back to such early dogs, that is, of the late glacial to early postglacial times, migrating in with human beings, or whether they have come from autochthonous ancestors of New World origin is a zoological problem that cannot be decided here. Opinions about it differ. In most recent times there seems to be more of a tendency to favor a Neotropical origin of Indian dogs" (420). In this last statement

420. Termer, 1957, p. 2.

Termer refers to comments by Gilmore (421).

421. Gilmore, 1950, p. 377.

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[439]
[177] In contrast to the obscure origin of the two breeds of dogs, there is no doubt about that of the cocks -- cacarí --, for these were acquired from the caboclos (planters, rubber and palm-fiber gatherers) by barter only a short time ago. Yet I was very much surprised when, on entering the Surára and Pakidái malokas, I found a large number of cocks but no hens (422), although they could

422. Incidentally, these are also called cacarí.

obtain these as well. There is no interest in doing so, however, for they keep cocks only for their colorful plumage and their crowing at dawn (423). Most families have one or two, which they

[231
171] 423. Ehrenreich reports of the Ipurina, an Aruak /Arawak/ tribe, that they keep only dogs and cocks as domestic animals, and that the latter were very popular in particular as sentinels (Ehrenreich, 1891, p. 61).

Surára
Pakidái

/89 cont./

12. Hygiene

515 Regular bathing, washing of the face and hands, and cleaning the finger and toe nails are unknown; this is also true for babies, who are often covered with a veritable crust of dirt. Nor do they /90/ brush their teeth or ever rinse their mouths. Yet I [147] [145] was never aware of an unpleasant body odor or bad breath on the Indians, and until an advanced age their teeth are dazzlingly white and sound. While hunting or gathering, however, if men and women are obliged to cross a brook or small river, they gladly utilize the opportunity to take a refreshing bath, and the same is true when female members of the tribe fetch water. A bath is greatly appreciated by children and young people, but [481] not at all by older persons. Most men can swim quite well and teach their sons also; women and girls who swim are exceptions.

● 177 515 As a result of occasional contacts with the palm-fiber gatherers on the Rio Aracá or with the personnel of the Indian protection post on the Demini, the Surára and Pakidái have for some time been acquainted with soap, and various Indians, predominantly children and young men and women, like to lather themselves when they take a bath. Several women had even taken to washing their hammocks now and then with soap. Thus, the cakes of soap [123] that I carried with me were very much in demand, as were perfume and hair tonic.

264 Eating is done only with the hands (see p. 184). If the meat was very greasy and the hands are smeared all over with dirt and grease, they are rubbed off somewhat against a post and then run through the hair a few times. The eating bowls and pots, with the remains of the meal, are then put down for the dogs, who at the same time take over the work of cleaning; eating utensils are seldom washed. When they are needed for the next meal, the woman passes them over her hair a few times. If there are still a few crusts of dirt present, she spits on them and rubs them with her hand.

Surára
Pakidái

/97 cont./

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759
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498. (cont.)
I should like to mention the Kaskihá Indians in the northeastern Chaco, among whom the witch doctor tries to heal the sick in the same way (Baldus, 1931, p. 143).

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During my nine-months' stay among the Surára and Pakidái the following sicknesses occurred there: grippe, pneumonia, malaria, chicken pox, and a gastric fever; fortunately, none was fatal (499). But the two Surára women who had pneumonia,

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[752]

499. Only the Pakidái youth Hokotõmarimã died after a fall from a pupunha palm, which probably caused internal injuries (see p. 149).

123 But the two Surára women who had Pneumonia,
755 first a young woman, Xunamĩ, the wife of Kurikayawõ, the younger brother of the chief, and later an older woman, Xanimã,
757 the approximately 47-year-old mother of Anyarawõ (see pp. 123/
● 177 125), and a boy, Xaniwõ (see p. 127), about 12 years old, would probably not have survived without the penicillin that I had brought along, for, in spite of untiring treatment by the chief and his helpers, their condition grew worse from day to day. In the first instance, the chief, Hewemãõ, and the husband, Kurikayawõ, finally permitted me to give Xunamĩ a penicillin injection in the upper arm on two successive days, whereupon she improved dramatically (500). In the second and third cases,

500. This cure increased my reputation tremendously, so that afterward I was properly adopted into the tribe of the Surára and, on the occasion of the great festival in memory of the dead, was also permitted to drink the bãhana soup mixed with the bone ashes of deceased relatives (see p. 231). If the woman had died after the injection, however, the intervention could have had grave consequences for me.

/97 cont./

[955] [957] [123] [177] the chief even asked me to give the patients "penicilina" after his healing efforts had again brought no success.

Of the various cures at which I was allowed to be present, I should like to describe in detail the following two treatments:

b) Magic cure (rekurś) for Xunamf:

Xunamf, the young, pretty wife of Kurikayawõ, fell ill quite suddenly. She had a high fever, lay apathetically in her hammock, and complained of severe chest pains. Her husband, who, with touching devotion, remained with her throughout the [913] [957] first day, that is, he sat beside her or lay in his hammock, led her several times to the nearby small river, in which she always remained for some time and drank copious amounts. She was not permitted to eat anything, but she had no desire to do so. During the night, the fever seemed to climb, for she was quite delirious and unable to sleep soundly. The next day she felt [959] even worse. Three times in the forenoon and as often in the afternoon her husband took her to the river, but there was no improvement after the baths and the drinking. At noon on the third day the husband, together with two other men, began [302] the first special cure. First of all, Kurikayawõ and the second participant painted serpentine lines on their faces and bodies with urucũ, while the third one rubbed himself all over with soot. Then they all three blew snuff-powder into each other's noses and in a few minutes they were in a state of ecstasy in which they leaped wildly about the sick woman lying in her hammock, shouted loudly, and gesticulated. Then, however, the cure followed very definite directions. The man painted completely black symbolically represented the spirit of sickness -- nonexf -- whom a hostile medicine man had conjured into the body of the sick woman, and the other two men, who now identified themselves with the hekurś (see p. 200), staged a sham battle against him. At first they were armed with large sticks and beat "nonexf" in order to kill him. But he defended himself with all his might. Then he hurled arrows at him, which, however, he threw back. After that the /98/ spirit of sickness stuck a carrying basket on his head, and this suddenly fell off. At once, the other two men

/100 cont./
755 was much worse, that this time the power of the Waikâ medicine
123 men was extraordinarily great. I then proposed to him that I
• 177 should give Xunamî penicillin injections. After lengthy consultations with the husband and other male members of the tribe he consented, though with misgivings, and luck was with the patient as well as with me. From this moment on the name penicilina (Portuguese spelling) became a magic word, for it had helped to cast away the sickness. Hewemãõ even asked me to bring him a great deal of it on my next visit.

755 c) Magic cure (rekurâ) for Xanimâ:

Xanimâ, the approximately 47-year-old mother of
[164] Anyarawõ (see p. 126), had been ill for five days with chicken pox and had had persistently high fever. At first she, too, was
[159] given the water cures, that is, she constantly had to take baths in the river and drink a great deal of water; as her weakness increased, she remained lying in her hammock and was doused with cold water. After that there were sham battles between two "hekurâ" and the bad, black-colored spirit of sickness, "noxexî."

When there was no improvement, Chief Hewemãõ and eight helpers again arranged a large, nocturnal rekurâ, but this time a somewhat different one, because, of course, a different
[302] sickness was involved (502). At first the men, eight with red

502. As has been mentioned above (see p. 212), every sickness has very definite texts, melodies, and dance steps.

serpentine lines painted on their faces and bodies and one colored black, in the light of the hearth, again formed a circle around the large clay plate standing in the middle, on which snuff-
[296] powder had been poured. They filled their snuff tubes with generous amounts of it and blew it into each other's noses, whereupon, after a few minutes, the state of ecstasy set in. The men hopped around their own axis several times, and, after a hissing sound on the part of the chief and with prolonged shrill

Surára Pakidái Waicá

114 /108 cont./ According To Zerries, Barker,
769 and Dupouy, there is also a similar combat among the Waikâ,
769 in which the partners alternately beat each other on the chest
526 with clenched fists (519a, b, c). I did not observe this among
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519a. Zerries, 1955b, p. 665.

519b. Barker, 1953, p. 447.

519c. Dupouy, 1953, p. 495.

114 the Surára and Pakidái. Similarly unknown there is the custom,
769 also reported by Zerries, that the men, when they run about in
276 the snuff-powder intoxication, hit each other on the back with the palm of the hand (520). The author named regards this as a

520. Zerries 1955b, p. 665.

769 fertility rite. There seems to be involved here, however, out-
177 side influences of agricultural tribes, which is indicated also by the ceremonial gathering of pupunha fruits (521).

521. Zerries, 1955b, p. 665.

769 It is further noteworthy that among the Waikâ women and
184 girls actively participate in the festival in that they take part in
562 some dances and even drink some of the banana soup mixed with
[266] bone ashes (522). In contrast to this, the female members of

522. Zerries, 1955b, pp. 662 ff.

the tribe act only as spectators among the Surára and Pakidái.

769 The endocannibalism should be regarded as a very signifi-
184 cant similar trait. It is documented for the Waikâ by Cruxent (523a)
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523a. Cruxent, 1953a, pp. 149/50.

/115 cont./

X. Character and Way of Thinking

157 In spite of insignificant contacts with the caboclos (rubber
• [177] and palm-fiber gatherers, planters, and the personnel of the Indian protection post Ajuricaba on the middle Demini), the Surára and Pakidái have preserved throughout the character of unspoiled primitive peoples who have not yet been alienated from such traditional Indian virtues as hospitality, moderation,
123 and honesty. I discovered this even on the occasion of my first
157 contact with them. When I, together with my servant Mateus, met nine Surára warriors on the Cachoeira dos Índios on the upper Rio Aracá, they gazed in wonder at our boat, the outboard motor, and the numerous gifts and trade articles in the form of knives, axes, pots, glass beads, etc., but they did not touch anything. They were also immediately willing to take us to their maloca, about 70 kilometers away, and carried the trunks, boxes and bags weighing 50-60 kilograms (555) (556), which, to

555. Becher, 1957a, p. 115.

556. Becher, 1958, p. 153.

their minds, contained tremendous treasures. During the strenuous three-day march, a definite feeling of harmony prevailed; there was constant laughing and jesting. When the Indians heard that Mateus called me "doutor" /doctor/, they burst into particularly hearty laughter and told us that totorí (jabuti /land turtle/) was a fitting name for me. The name remained with me until my departure and was brilliantly appropriate for me, for, in comparison with the free Forest Indians, anyone from civilization presents a very clumsy picture in the forest regions.

These nine warriors could easily have murdered us and departed alone with the gifts and trade articles. But not for a moment was I aware of any danger, for there could not have been more gracious or thoughtful companions. How great their honesty was I should like to document with the following example: During the march on the impassable Indian paths in the eternal

/118 cont./

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563. (cont.)
Steinen about the Suyá on the Xingú, in which he declares that these Indians knew how to use the pencil very well and drew beautiful motifs in his notebook, although he was the first white man they had seen (Karl von den Steinen, 1886, p. 212).

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Younger people are distinguished by a gift for rapid comprehension and an astonishing learning capacity. Although these Indians very rarely come in contact with caboclos, and in most cases only the men, both sexes have at their command a rather large store of Portuguese words and figures of speech. One little
124 Surára boy about nine years old, Jubeauwõ, also called Mandú,
159 who had spent almost two years in the hut of the palm-fiber
[191] gatherer Manuel Antonio Gómez on the Rio Aracá, had a nearly perfect command of the Portuguese language and performed unique service as my interpreter. I owe it to him alone that I was able to penetrate more deeply into the mental culture of the Surára and Pakidái and put together a complete vocabulary (564).

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564. Three years ago the little boy suffered dangerous burns on the abdomen by an upset vessel containing boiling tree resin. Since the chief had given up hope that he would recover, he wanted to have
[888] him given the deathblow. The custom of this tribe, as well as that of the Pakidái, decrees that all old and seriously ill persons who are no longer able to take part in the general migrations must be killed (see pp. 153/154). The grandmother of the little boy, who is an orphan took him secretly one night to the hut of the Spanish palm-fiber gatherer,

Surára
Pakidái

/118 cont./

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564. (cont.)
Manoel Antonio Gómez, who succeeded in saving his life. The chief was said to have been very angry at first over the arbitrary action of the grandmother, but then, when he saw that the little one had recovered, he calmed down.

123 Most men, after but a short time, had no difficulty handling
153 our two guns; a few were soon even operating the outboard
[177] motor, and the Surára chief Hewemão, who showed great interest in my camera, took very acceptable pictures with it.
153 The reasoning power seems to be somewhat more strongly developed among the men than among the women (565).

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565. This conclusion agrees with an observation by Baldus among the Tumerehã, and the scholar adds a remark which could also be applied to the Surára and Pakidái: "The differences in the talents of the sexes are perhaps the result of their way of life and division of labor. Thus, among the Tumerehã, the man's way of acquiring food has probably developed his acuteness, for he does not merely gather fruits, like the woman, but also goes hunting..." (Baldus, 1931, p. 119).

802 /119/ XII. Counting and Conception of Time

The Surára and Pakidái count only to three:

1 -- mahõn

2 -- porokabõ

3 -- prukatabõ.

Sanema
Warao 5518
Saliva 5515
Bari 5513

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/180 cont./

The Barí suffered greatly from the Yupa, the Piaroa and Warao from the Caribe, but these sufferings were minimal compared to the oppression to which other tribes were subjected by the Whites. The Yanoama have been attacked for hundreds of years by the Caribe, who surrounded their territory with a semicircle along the north; the Yanoama endured something similar from the Arawak, who surrounded them in a semicircle along the south. But all in all, the White has not been very successful so far in approaching this primitive population and his destructive influence has not affected their ancestral customs. The Caribe and Arawak have declined gradually in vigor and numbers; now we are witnesses of the triumph of the Yanoama over their neighbors of a more refined culture, for not only did they defend their territory, but were successful in spreading to the north and west.

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The strongest and most efficaceous ally of the Yanoama has been the Cordillera de Parima, together with the dense tropical selva of the Territorio Amazonas. In the /181/ fateful period of persecution they have always found a safe refuge in the protecting selva. Nevertheless, as of relatively recent times, the different Yanoama subtribes are beginning to realize that the space beyond the conventional boundaries of their tribal territory is sparsely populated, almost deserted. The number of their traditional enemies has diminished considerably, and the invasions of their territory have had practically no consequences. In this manner they have gained almost 100 kilometers to the north of the Sierra de Pacarima, where the Casapare now live on the Upper Paragua, and the northern group of the Sanemá on the headwaters of the Ventuari, Erebato, and Caura rivers.

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The center of distribution of the Casapare is located to the south of the Sierra Pacarima in the basin of the Rio Branco. We know this Yanoama subtribe only through a few sporadic superficial contacts, and the people, as well as their territory, remain practically unknown. For this reason we consider the name Casapare with which we designated all the Yanoama in the zone of study as strictly preliminary, and we would not be surprised if we had to change it in the future for a more exact and adequate

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name.

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At the other end of the island of Maraca the territory of the Taurepan (Pemón) begins, and it is interesting to note that about the year 1911 the Casapare, under the command of one captain Kuranaí, had established peaceful contacts with the neighboring Caribe for the purpose of acquiring by barter European utensils, which they valued very highly. The custom of cultivating small plantings, which were noted by Schomburgk, Koch-Grünberg, and Gheerbrandt (1955, p. 345), must also be of Caribe origin.

Koch-Grünberg (1928, pp. 302-308) was able to publish the first vocabulary of a Yanoama language, and, as the same author points out, some words of Caribe origin can be distinguished in this idiom of the Uraricapará River, /184/ but almost all of them refer to utensils and cultivated plants of Caribe or European origin.

The other group (Waica?) was visited by Koch-Grünberg four weeks after his first encounter with Yanoama people, with whom he lived in a rancheria on the Motomotó across from the Sierra Marutani. This group had relations with the Makú of the Auarí River, from whom they adopted certain cultural elements, such as agriculture. We do not have a vocabulary from this group, but, according to information given to Koch-Grünberg by his native companions, they speak the same Yanoama idiom with slight dialectal differences.

The expansion of the Casapare toward the north is of recent date, since their sworn enemies, the inhabitants of the Paragua, as well as the Pemón to the northeast, ceased their reprisals and allowed the unhindered advance of the Yanoama nomads. It seems that at the same time the Sanemá of the southwest and the Casapare began to invade the zone. At the present time, the Yanoama dominate as far as the Marí River, a left tributary of the Paragua (5° 10'). The Pemón to the east of the Paragua have vacated the space between this river and the Caroní. Their nuclei are to be found on the Gran Sabana, in the southeastern part of Venezuela. Under the joint influence of civilization and the mission they have lost their characteristics as Caribe

P
197 /184 cont./ Casapare
799 Auake 555
161 Arecuna 55 16
expansionists, and their number at present is quite small; they number 1,800 individuals and show a density of 1:16.5 square kilometers.

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177 The Mayoncon and Arecuna, along the north, do not make
648 an effective barrier to Yanoama expansion. Here, however they are liable to clash with the already advanced civilization of these regions where they will meet the Indian, the Negro, and the White with individual cultures irreducible by the Paleo-Indian culture of the Yanoama.

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101 Among the tribes which have been absorbed by the Yanoama
619 are the Kaliana, Auakí, etc., about whose identification there is some confusion in the literature.

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104 Kaliana, however, is the name which the Casapare give to the Sapé. The latter were identified as Kaliana by a native companion of Koch-Grünberg (1923, pp. 12-13; cf. idem, 1922, p. 227), while Armellada and Matallana (1942, p. 103) identify them with the name "Shirianá" (Casapare) as Karianapuik. In 1956 the Sapé (Kariana, Kaliana) were visited by Montoya, who classifies them as related to the "Shirishana" (1958, p. 168). "It is an isolated group," says Montoya, "which lives on the Antabarí River and upper Pao; in the zones of the upper Paragua and Pauré-Murán River.

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241 /185/ "They devote themselves to agriculture, but produce
433 only as much as they consume or a little more for barter with the
439 Shirianna who are travelers and supply them with salt and other items which they lack.

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501 "Some of them have learned to make curiaras in such a rudimentary manner as to make the Moñongón Indians, the masters of this art, smile. But they do make very fragile 'shells,' which allow them to travel to hunting and fishing zones, carrying

A
light loads.

512 "They marry frequently with the Shirianna groups and even
A with the Arekuna. They appear to be destined to disappear as
101 a differentiated ethnic group or to be totally absorbed by the Shirianna, more numerous and nearer than the Arekuna" (Montoya, ibid.).

4: Wilbert--34 E-4,5 (1358) 1963 SQ18 Yanoama SQ19
Sanema
Makiritare SS 20

/188 cont./

but the extant data offer no certainty in this regard. It is interesting that Gheerbrandt (1955, p. 348) is of the opinion that the Makiritare had left the Uraricuera some twenty years previously.

The Guadema seem to be different from the Casapare, according to what one can deduce from the above-mentioned book; probably it is a matter of a local Sanemá or Waica group.

The center of distribution of the Sanemá is the basin of the Padamo River, a tributary of the upper Orinoco. Their territory is bounded on the south by Waica territory, on the west by the Makiritare of the Cunucunuma, on the north by the Makiritare of the upper Ventuari, Erebato, and Caura, and on the east by the little known territory of the Casapare.

If we judge from the present situation of the distribution of the Yanoama, it is quite probable that the first Yanoama with whom the Whites had contact on their trips along the upper Orinoco were the Sanemá, who appear in historical sources as the Guaharibo. One finds the Guaharibo frequently mentioned together with the Waica, but it is interesting that from the very first reports authors made a distinction between Waica and Guaharibo.

/189/ Caulin (1958, pp. 305-306), writing in 1779, places the Guaribe on the Maraca and its tributaries. According to him, they are white in color like the Spaniards and are the same "uaribas" already mentioned by the "Expedición de Solano." Humboldt also speaks of Guaicas and of Guaharibos, having met representatives of them in the Esmeralda Mission. Spruce (1908: 1, pp. 396-398), who met an old Guaharibo man on his trip on the Casiquiare, is the first one to leave us the fullest and most authentic information regarding the Yanoama of the upper Orinoco. According to this author, the Guaharibo call themselves Kud4-Kubui, but it is difficult today to decide whether these are Guaharibo or Waica. We have a like opinion regarding the Guaharibo of Chaffanjon (1889). It is possible that the Sanemá may have occupied zones farther toward the Casiquiare and the Cunucunuma, but the Arawak and Caribe of this zone occupied these places before the arrival of the Whites, and the boundaries were established by the tribes interested in them.

Y /189 cont./

Y 174 101 The expansion of the Sanemá to the north, that is, from the Padamo to the upper Ventuari, Erebato, and Caura, is relatively recent, but, to judge from the data given us by glottochronology, the separation of the various groups of the subtribe corresponds to 600-1,700 years. We established contact with three northern groups of the Sanemá: the Mabudub of the upper Ventuari, the Taclandub of the upper Caura, and the Pubmatari of the Canaracuni. They apparently represent Sanemá groups which are quite well established, and the internal distance of this linguistic family is, in a way, surprising.

Y 101 184 The Sanemá of the Padamo and of the upper Orinoco are practically unknown to science, and it is expected that the cultural difference between them and their brothers who live north of 4° and in close contact with the Makiritare is relatively pronounced.

Y 101 648 167 The geographic separation of the Sanemá into a southern group and another northern one is recent and is due to the fact that in 1947 Captain Cardona had to make a landing field on the Canaracuni (personal communication), and, since there were no Indians in the zone to help him in his venture, he went to Brazil and brought the first Sanemá to this region of Venezuela.

Y 167 This date marks the beginning of the infiltration of the Yanoama element on a larger scale into the land of the Makiritare, their

Y M 643 neighbors on the northwest, with whom they have lived in deep enmity from remote times. While the Makiritare of the Cunucunuma still do not tolerate large groups of Yanoama in their territory, those of the Ventuari, Erebato, and Caura live in close contact

Y M [179] with large groups of the Sanemá subtribe. This was the way in which Makiritare culture of the tropical selva type penetrated to that essentially /190/ preagricultural tribe composed of hunters and gatherers with a very rudimentary culture. The Sanemá re-

Y M 648 ceived extremely bad treatment at the hands of the Makiritare, comparable to that received by a slave at the hands of his master, for which reason toward the year 1950 the Sanemá revolted against

4 [411] the Makiritare and declared a war without quarter against them. It was then that the different Makiritare subtribes united to repulse the Sanemá, whom they conquered in various encounters, thanks to their fire-arms.

/190 cont./

thanks to their firearms. It seems that, as a result of this incident, the Makiritare and the northern group of the Sanemá lived together more peaceably, and today it is rare to find a Makiritare settlement in that zone of the Ventuari, Erebato, and Caura, without a few Sanemá groups in the immediate vicinity.

The clash of the two cultures began a process of progressive acculturation, and the hunters and gatherers of wild plants adopted a superior culture: from then on they would be agriculturalists. Furthermore, the genetic constitution of the two tribes underwent profound changes, and that of the minority group will perhaps be absorbed by the Sanemá in a relatively short period of time.

This process of acculturation and genetic absorption is interesting, for one is in the habit of thinking that the Caribe have always been the victorious and dominant invaders. But in this concrete case the process seems to be working in the opposite direction. The advance of the Sanemá, who adopted, among other things, the art of navigation, has brought about the isolation of the two large Makiritare groups: the Yecuana (Decuana) of the Ventuari and Caura on the one hand, and the Cunuhana of the Cunucunuma on the other. Prior to this, these two groups used to visit each other frequently, their members were related to each other, and strong family ties existed between them. At the present time the Makiritare youths know only partially the rivers and routes of those regions traveled so many times by their fathers, and they travel in small groups, overcome with deep anguish every time that they have to cross the zone occupied by the Sanemá. What was observed on the trip on the upper Ventuari fully confirmed this opinion for us, for there is not the least doubt but that the Makiritare captain, who, together with our five traveling companions, had fought eight years previously against the Sanemá, felt ill at ease on leaving the Makiritare rancherías behind, and his nervousness suddenly increased when one day we came upon a Sanemá raft on the bank of the river. They could not hide their nervousness when inland, in the selva, we came across a conuco and seven houses recently vacated. They always

Makiritare SS 20

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scorn them, and, at first sight, they seemed to be unworried, but the knowledge that they no longer live alone in the land of their fathers, and the fact of having heard that four days prior to our arrival /191/ at the conuco an Indian who had sought refuge by climbing a tree was shot by a Sanemá arrow and fell lifeless into the river, constantly tortured them.

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A powerful stimulus which always encouraged the Makiritare on their numerous trips was to get a wife among their neighbors of the same tribe. Nowadays, despite the intense scorn which the Makiritare profess toward the Yanoama, taking a wife from that tribe is not considered an impossible or degrading thing; there are many Yanoama women who have married Makiritare men (cf. Grelier, 1955b, p. 10). This matrimonial interchange inevitably carries with it an assimilation of cultures between the two tribes, a process in which the Makiritare cultural pattern will dominate that of the Yanoama and the Yanoama genes will infiltrate the Makiritare gene pool. There is not the least doubt but that the Sanemá, who were brought in for a short time, arrived at the upper Ventuari and Caura where they took up residence to stay, and that the present fusion between the Caribe and the Yanoama ought not to be explained so much by the good will of the former as by the vitality of the latter.

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The Waica subtribe occupies the central part of the present Yanoama territory, that of the upper Orinoco and its tributaries above the mouth of the Ocamo, including also the southern bank of the river (Barker, 1953, p. 434). As we have already mentioned, they appear to live also in the general arc of the upper Rio Branco and its western tributaries, and Schuster (1958, p. 114) is very probably right when he says that the Sierra Parima does not bound the Waica zone, but that it extends to Brazilian territory.

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We have already mentioned the first contacts which the Whites had with the Waica, and, after a somewhat unfruitful effort by Hamilton Rice at the beginning of the present century, the Waica world went without contact with science until the New Tribes Mission was able to start peaceful relations with the Waica through the missionary James Paul Barker. Some ethnographic data were also published on this Yanoama subtribe by several

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342 The two windscreens had two posts stuck superficially into the ground at a distance of two meters apart. Contiguous to the post there was a smaller stake tied to it with a bejuco. The roof of this screen was covered with interlaced branches and roofed with platanillo leaves and supported with a slight inclination against two posts. The roof projects from the posts some 40 centimeters and touches the ground at its lower edge. In these houses the Sanemá hang their hammocks of bejuco or majagua. In some ranchos we found vestiges of fire.

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● 177 342 The houses of Makiritare type (rectangular or oblong) are small-scale imitations and have only one room. The roofs, made of palm leaves, are of two rectangular slopes and are raised on four or six posts. The edges of the roof are straight or rounded. The walls consist of bark or juxtaposed sticks. They have an average dimension of four meters long by two meters wide and approximately three high. Each house has one or two quite narrow doors. Within the house (of the Makiritare type) the greatest disorder reigns: from the roof and from the walls hang baskets, gourds, weapons, leather bags, tobacco, palm fruit, hammocks /chinchorros/ of bejuco, majagua, and cotton. On the floor there are hearths, firewood, cooking utensils, guapas with spindle and cotton, yuca graters, dogs, and children, all in confusion without order or arrangement. It is clear that they are not used to living under a roof, and the house is a place for storing things rather than a habitation.

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105 422 484 The technology of the Sanemá is very little-developed, and precisely for this reason one can classify the Sanemá (and the Yanoama in general) as representatives of the most backward peoples of America and of the whole world. It would seem that the ideal of these seminomadic Indians is: omnia mea mecum porto -- everything that is mine I carry with me! and, apart from their weapons, a few implements, and a basket, it is unusual for them to carry anything else on their travels. They do not even transport their hammocks /202/ of bejuco or majagua from one camp to another, but rather make new ones each time they need them.

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412 [184] (Zerries, 1956a), Casapare (Koch-Grünberg, 1923, p. 313 and Pl. 47), Karimé (Salathé, 1931-32, p. 306 and Figure 16), Surarí and Pakidai (Becher, 1960, p. 54). The handle of the knife, [171] relatively short, may be made of wood or of a simple piece of bone; it is in style also among the Guayakí (Hitte, /203/ 1897, Pl. III, Figures 4 and 6) and the Siriono (Holmberg, 1950, p. 14), both tribes with a primitive culture.

[237] In order to smooth their bows, the Sanemá use the tusk of a [197] peccary. Before the introduction of iron axes they used stone axes, which are still found among them, although rarely.

The most important weapon of the Sanemá is the bow and arrow. The bow, plano-convex, 2-2.10 meters, is made of 411 [324] macanilla wood. In the middle it measures 2-3 centimeters in width, which tapers to 0.5 centimeter at the ends. The bow-string is made of plant fibers. The different classes of arrows which they use are distinguished according to the different points that they have. Their total length varies between 1.60 meters and 2.40 meters (cf. Méndez-Arocha, 1960, pp. 54-60). This latter trait of having arrows of this length is another characteristic of the nomadic Indians of the Tropical Forest. The arrow points vary according to the game that they wish to hunt. The bamboo point, lance-shaped, is for large game; for medium-sized and small animals they use arrows whose point is made of monkey bone. There is another point of wood which they poison with curare and which they use as a weapon of war (cf. Koch-Grünberg, 1923, Pl. 47; Becher, 1960, p. 18). The lower part of the arrow is provided with two halves of a turkey feather, in the manner typical of the tribes of Guayana.

[627] Another weapon for combat is the club 1.50-2.50 meters in length and of heavy wood, which they use to settle local fights and which reminds one of the clubs of the Botocudo of Brazil.

291 Sanemá dress is the simplest. Both sexes wear a cord tied about the waist. The men carry the penis fastened up by the prepuce. Among the Nabudub we saw several women who wore no clothing other than the above-mentioned cord; most of the Sanemá, however, use a guayuco of cotton thread, dyed with onoto and in the same manner as the type Becher describes (1960,

/208 cont./

241 Among the Sanemá, doubtless as a result of their contact
● [177] with their Macú and Caribe neighbors, agriculture has taken on increasing importance. The manner of cultivation is still very rudimentary, that of "slash and burn." The principal products are: plantains, bananas, sweet and bitter yuca, ocumo /malanga/, and certain herbs which have magical importance (cf. Barker, 824 1953, p. 444, similar plants among the Waica). Among the 241 magical plants of the Sanemá there is one on which they lavish great care. An informant told us about the general consternation which seized all of them one day when a band of enemies tore up, during the night, all the magical plants of their conucos. They believed that they were going to die or at least become sick, and the "sabif had much work" in order to save his people. There is here a similar belief which we have already noted in connection with the eagles and hanekasá.

241 Agriculture has given a degree of stability to the Sanemá
178 subgroups and has introduced changes in their traditional social
[628] system. Not all the groups have adopted this new economy and disputes and fights frequently arise because the gatherers indiscriminately appropriate the products of a conuco of the agricul-
[648] tural group. That was the motive which caused the Makiritare to fight with the Sanemá, who at that time had still not adopted the agriculture which flourished among their neighbors.

231 The Sanemá do not have domestic animals, and even dogs are uncommon. It is possible that the Yanoama have adopted
[192] them recently. They have still not found a specific name for this animal, and they call it póliawan, like the jaguar. Some informants insisted that there is a phonetic difference between the word póiawan = jaguar and póliawan = dog, but there cannot be the slightest doubt but that the same word is involved. They raise dogs so that they may serve them as helpers in hunting.

In a Sanemá rancheria there are frequently found animals of various species, but tame. The hunters take home young turkeys, cranes, macaws, and parrots, as well as guinea pigs, lapas, and monkeys, as presents for their wives or children. /Illustrations appear here./

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273 The beverage of the Sanemá is water. They do not make
271 alcoholic beverages. In recent times the Sanemá who live in
177 contact with the Makiritare have learned to prepare cashíri, and they are beginning to drink it with some frequency. Nevertheless, the preparation of alcoholic beverages is not common among the Sanemá and Yanoama in general.

252 The greater part of their food is toasted or broiled in the
263 coals. They do not eat salt, properly speaking, but they use
261 wood ashes and peppers. They also clean dry clay and eat it.

276 As stimulants they have tobacco and yopo. They do not smoke, but rather roll up the tobacco leaves, and, after treating them with ashes, they put them in back of the lower lip. The yopo is made with certain leaves and ashes of bark. It seems that they have several kinds, according to the degree of strength. They showed us a gray type and a black one. One who wishes to take a dose puts the intoxicating powder in a tube and a companion blows it into his nose. In general, yopo is re-
[764] lated to religious ideas. It appears that they take it at burial ceremonies when they accompany a deceased person and his "híkula upwards." The theurgists also use it frequently in their various ceremonies. There are known cases in which a man "flew off" with a strong dose of yopo and, losing his way, never came back to earth!

581 The founding of a family is the fervent desire of all the
183 young people of the tribe. We observed a degree of irregularity
591 in the custom of determining the matrimonial residence. In the
184 Sanemá group of the Erebato, this seems to be bilocal, as among the Waica of the upper Orinoco (Barker, 1953, p. 478), while on the Ventuari we noticed a tendency toward unilocality. We
591 are not certain, but it would seem that normal residence is initially
182 matrilocal with postmatrimonial betrothal service and then changes
596 to bilocal. This arrangement brings about the formation of bilocal extended families in Yanoama society.

596 Societies with bilocal extended families are relatively
591 rare, but their existence among the Sanemá does not surprise us if we bear in mind that the economic situation of the tribe lends

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596 itself to an arrangement of this sort. In their seminomadic state
591 there do not seem to be any sufficiently decisive economic factors
[182] to require a unilocal residence rule, which in a way would hinder a young man, after his marriage, from remaining in the group of his family of orientation or from leaving in order to found his family of procreation matrilocally, according to the particular
591 circumstances. But what we are sure of is that the irregularities
596 observed are precisely a result of the economic and technologi-
197 cal changes which the Sanemá of the regions /210/ adjacent to
241 the Makiritare are undergoing via the process of acculturation. The cultivation of the land, although still rudimentary, and the possibility of augmenting their properties have brought about as a natural consequence, not only greater stability and possibly a considerable demographic increase, but also the impetus which disrupts the balanced equilibrium present in the custom of choosing the postnuptial residence which is fundamental for the bilocal extended family (cf. Murdock, 1949, p. 35). So it is that one of the factors which has most contributed to bringing about disequilibrium among the Sanemá was the adoption of the Caribe agricultural system. The postmatrimonial moving from one local group to another was not of any particular importance in a nomadic society, but nowadays it presents certain difficulties not even suspected previously, for a man now has to leave his cultivated fields if he is to go with his wife. We are sure that the tendencies in the direction of the unilocal custom have their
[601] roots precisely in this economic change. Finally, the existence of the bilocal extended family among the Yanoama is in complete accord with the Hawaiian type of social organization which we are describing as typical for this tribe.

594 Without knowing a Sanemá nuclear family intimately, it is
621 difficult to group with certainty the members of a local group solely on the basis of their family ties, particularly in a community in which polygamy, the sororate, the levirate, and a Hawaiian kinship system are practiced. There are occasions, however, on which the members of a nuclear family gather together: to eat, to sleep, etc., and, in spite of our not having full knowledge of Sanemá society, we can, with all this, say that the nuclear

In 1913, Koch-Grünberg[6] had observed that Yanoama was different from Cariban and that it apparently represented an isolated language. While this opinion was shared by the majority of authors who subsequently referred to the language, two American linguists have recently broken with this tradition by forwarding suggestions of possible affiliations. Greenberg[8] classified "Shirianá" as a distinct group belonging to the "*Chibchan proper*," subfamily of the "*Macro-Chibchan*" family, and Swadesh[7] established a "*Macro-Sirionó*" with an internal separation of 50 mc, including Chapacura (27 mc), and Sirionó (21 mc). He later suggested (personal communication) that Waraoan should also be reckoned in "*Macro-Sirionó*," which would increase the internal divergence of this microphylum to that of 72 mc. Since the latter suggestion is of major interest to the distribution of the Diego antigen, we shall return to the discussion of the same after having presented the material on the Waica blood groups.

Cultural aspects. The Yanoama are a semi-nomadic forest people who rely for their subsistence chiefly on hunting, gathering, and arboriculture. Fishing is of a very subordinate importance and only peripheral groups, such as the northern Sanumá, have adopted agriculture from neighboring tribes. Although arboriculture is of vital importance among most of the Yanoama subtribes (plantains [*Musa paradisiaca normalis*], and pupunha [*Guilielma gasipaes*]), there can be little doubt that the basic economic and cultural pattern of the Yanoama has remained essentially on a Paleo-Indian culture level of the early hunting peoples of South America.

Yanoama technology is very little developed. The Waica produce thick-walled conical cooking pots, and Yanoama women make large twined carrying baskets. Cordage, belts, and one type of hammock are made of planted cotton, but weaving and metal work of any kind is unknown. Recently, several Yanoama groups have learned how to make dugout canoes, but their crafts and paddles still lack the perfection of the same artifacts among their neighbors (e.g. Caribs). Very long bows and arrows are the main weapons of these Indians, but stick-clubs may antedate the former.[8]

The local groups of the Yanoama are composed of bands of several extended families with nuclear family households. Residence rules have, as yet, not clearly been established, but judging from the Sanumá of the Ericbaru and from the

6 Koch-Grünberg, 1913, pp. 493-498.
6 Greenberg, 1956.
7 Swadesh, 1959, p. 28.
8 Only the Waica were reported to make pottery, and the planting of cotton is very recent.

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one gave a thought to these peaks that towered higher with every bend of the river. Then one afternoon, after a storm, they dropped out of sight, and we realized that we had entered a different region. Mannera pointed leftwards, to the mouth of a small river whose water was yellow.

'Pulipuli. Nuna,' he told us—Nuna being the Shirian and Makiritari pronunciation of 'Luna'. 'There is my home, the home of the Shiriana.'

We swung into the mouth of the Luna and tied up under a tall clay bank among a few ill-made canoes—if you could call them canoes, for they looked more like rotten tree-trunks swept on to the little landing-beach in the course of some sudden flood.

Our arrival in the dirty waters of the Luna was a signal for swift and secret flight on the part of the population. Some Shirian youngsters had been hunting a capybara which the throb of our motor scared off. The boys, no less scared than the animal, ran to hide in the nearby huts, spreading the wondrous news that men had come with beards and an engine.

The Moon Valley people occupy a fair-sized wedge of territory in the forests between the Lower Canaracuni and the Caura. Their little huts are sorry imitations of the big Makiritari erections, and they have burned out big patches of forest for the sowing of manioc and bananas. All this is the work of the last twenty years. Not till then did the tribes of the Shirian borderland grow weary of their nomad life, their wars and their plundering expeditions, and decide to set up house and home. Pulipuli became a sort of agricultural centre for the groups living on the Upper Caura, or on the Merehuari and its tributary streams as far as the great mountain saddle between Uaua-Coco, Canana, and Uagua. These people here were therefore the most advanced of the Shirians, not only in a geographical sense but also in their culture. Their numbers were continually increasing because they had a magnetic attraction for neighbouring tribes who were still mere primitive forest hunters.

Mannera had married a Pulipuli girl and then joined her tribe. 'Let us build a fine house,' he had told her, 'and I'll come and live with you. I'll bring good manioc and banana roots. We'll plant a big patch, in the proper way we Makiritaris know, and there'll be no lack of food. You Shirians are for ever as hungry as beasts and I can't stomach the worms you eat.'

There was great puzzlement among the old Shirians—those whose hairless heads showed the marks of so many battles and so many robbing and plundering expeditions all through the valley and the Merehuari cordillera as far as the

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Branco river in Brazil. They considered an agricultural life a peasant's life, and a dull one at that, with no possible appeal to the imagination. There were a few palavers about it, but it is well-known that among primitive peoples the old are listened to least: wisdom favours the youths and the boys, who have their whole lives in front of them—not behind them like a stream flowing away. The young men prevailed, and burned the forest. The first big hut was built according to Manuera's ideas, and served as a pattern for all the Shiriana when they came to build.

So we too arrived at this 'big hut', which Manuera showed us with a pride that was scarcely justified, and here too the Shiriana fled away into the woods, much to the amusement of our guides. We could hear them there, uttering their guttural cries of terror and wonderment.

Inside the hut there was no one, with the exception of two old folk stretched out in their liana hammocks. They didn't stir: it was as if they didn't even see us. One of them was a woman whose body was reddened nearly all over with *sibeie*—a skin disease frequent among the Indians. A macaw, scared by the sight of our beards, set up a howl on his perch and started biting through the cord which attached him to it. Manuera went off into the woods, calling the others, and the thick green swallowed him up for a good hour. We were rather afraid he would want to stop here for the night, for our stomachs were turning at the filth around us, but we had misjudged our man: Manuera was now engaged in more important business and had no desire for more than a brief, benevolent survey of his kinsfolk. We very soon got back to the boat and at last were able to take deep breaths of the fresh river and forest air.

Manuera told us that the Shiriana had not been really so scared by our arrival. Indeed, they had been expecting us. But they couldn't quite pluck up the courage to look close. Our stature, our beards, our clothes and our guns, in the eyes of primitive people, turned us into supermen—dread figures, terrifying as monsters and above all, essentially evil.

The news that we were on the way had been bruited abroad by the party we had met at the Mené pan—and *à propos* of this, we learned from Manuera that the spider-child had died soon afterwards, somewhere on the Sabaru. It was a relief to hear this, even if the poor little monstrosity's death had been caused by the sight of us, as the Shiriana thought. Manuera's gestures became wild, and his speech difficult to follow, as he tried to explain their attitude.

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perhaps for a trip of several days, to look for it. These excursions have a festive air: the Indians hunt, fish and swim, and shoot the rapids with gleeful yells—so come home with their canoes loaded high with these soft palm fronds. Within a radius of several kilometres, all the trees will have been stripped.

Smaller communities of Makiritari, without the means or the enthusiasm to build the 'big hut', will content themselves with a rectangular structure. This has a single-span roof sloping down from the back to the front, with rough walls of stakes driven into the ground and bound with lianas. The roof will still consist of San Paulo leaves, but these are less intricately woven than in the case of the 'big hut', being made on the ground like a hurdle and then hoisted into place and firmly secured.

The Pemontón, on the other hand, have adopted an entirely different pattern of hut, for temporary purposes or for housing a small number only. Taller and less graceful than the Makiritari type, it is roofed most ingeniously with alternating layers of poles of gradually decreasing lengths set upon each other so as to form a pyramid. This is finished off with whole fronds of *seba* or *maripa* palm—fair sized trees found in profusion near all the rivers of the Amazon-Guiana region.

The Shirians—the real Shirians, that is to say the Samatari and the Guayca—build nothing at all. Those of them who do adapt themselves to the humiliating labour of house-building are just keeping up with their neighbours, the Makiritari. The forest bristles with so many trees, big and little, and all so straight that they might have been placed there on purpose; going up and down them is a grand game and one that always provides something to eat: a grub, a wasps' nest with honey in it, fruit. . . . So why shut oneself off from it all, away from this forest that provides food? One should clearly do the opposite. Why build huts from dead trees, when one can use the live ones? All it needs is two crossed Y-shaped boughs propped against a trunk so as to make a triangle, and there is a place to sling one's hammock!

Sometimes, in the forest, the traveller comes across an abandoned Shirian camp: just some heaps of ashes and a goodly number of these triangular 'bedsteads'—a true forest within a forest. The rotting hammocks are still hanging where they were put.

We couldn't quite accept any of these indigenous architectural patterns for our own purposes, however, since we felt ourselves to be the heirs of a nobler tradition. We had to find our own answer to the problem. We opted for a big

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IV

Had Luis Antonio been wearing clothes, we should have pronounced him very well turned out, for he looked dark and perfectly groomed in his nudity, which was enhanced in very smart fashion by a loincloth of fiery red and a ruffle of white feathers on his right arm. In addition to his name and his knowledge of Spanish there was one other thing about him that suggested that his story might not be quite the usual one: his rotten teeth. All the Indian peoples have teeth that are very strong and brilliantly white. They are used to hard exertions on the meat the savage eats, while his fruits provide the necessary minerals, and keep their strength and colour well into old age. Luis Antonio was an exception—his teeth were no longer good: there was a long history to them, and we soon got to know it.

Uaremu—Uarma, Ualema, Uadma, or Uademu were alternative forms, all very close in the Shirian pronunciation—had been a Guayca boy from the Uagua tribe. They were real warriors, forever at war with the Samatari on the other side of the cordillera. Battles were a regular feature of tribal life. When the arsenal of long-range weapons had been exhausted the armies would come to grips with clubs and sticks. During one such engagement the young Uaremu disappeared into the forest and, finding himself lost, stayed all alone on the bank of the Merevari, living on fruit and worms. At the time he was probably no more than four or five years old, but the Guayca Indians are savages among the savages, and four or five is old enough for a boy to know what is good to eat in the forest and what isn't; where to find it; and how to catch it. While he was all by himself on a beach, getting a few little fish by striking at them with a stick, a Makiritari party came along, found him there, and took him with them. They were going down the Caura to sell canoes to the people on the rubber plantations at Maripa (which is almost on the Orinoco). The child, travelling with them, soon accustomed himself to their language and their Casuva bread.

At Maripa, one Martin Viudo, a rubber man who knew Guiana like the palm of his hand, saw the boy and prodded him as you would prod a spring chicken or a sucking-pig in a shop.

'A fine boy this,' he declared. 'But wicked. Wicked and obstinate, like all

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●177 his tribe. You can see it in his eyes. . . .' Uarema kept them down all the time . . . 'but I want to keep him here. He'll be the first Shirian to go to school, and if he doesn't go, he'll be the first to get his bottom kicked by a civilized boot.'

Uarema stayed behind, while the Makiritari went back with an extra few yards of the good old red cloth.

Martin Viudo was a collector—of human beings. Around him, like one big family, lived Indians of every race: Taurepán from the Gran Sabana, Arekuna from the Caroní, Makiritari from the Caura, Piaroa from the Orinoco, Cuiba from the Guaviare lands and finally one Baré from Río Negro. The only one he hadn't got was a Shirian—the prize monster of the whole Indian scene. And now he'd found him too!

He began by calling him Luis Antonio, after a friend of his who had died of fever on the Atabapo. He clothed him and entrusted him to Donna Josefa, the village schoolma'm. At school the boys called him a cannibal, and he hit out at them whenever he could, as 'his wicked instincts' prompted him. At any rate, that was Donna Josefa's opinion: she couldn't stand the little savage. Very soon, he started to play truant from that narrow world bounded by the alphabet and the primer with its obscure explanations of the catechism—A for Adam, B for Bible, C for Christ and so on. It was all beyond his understanding, and one day he hit the schoolmistress and went back to his home, where the wife of Martin Viudo promptly hit him. Having cried off school, Luis Antonio went to work for his adopted father. He was growing fast now, and strong enough to paddle and steer boat-loads of balata and sarape through the Caura estuary. He soon learned to handle a motor too; on Sundays he would go off to Maripa and get drunk, begging tots of white rum off the peons who were merry enough to regale him freely. 'Drink up, Man-Eater, and then go back to your cannibals and spit in their faces!' they would shout. Then with a laugh they would pour him whole glasses of brandy. By the time he was twenty his teeth were rotting away with alcohol and iced drinks—and he couldn't stand civilization any longer.

159 No one knows why or how, least of all himself—but something called him back to the forest under the rocky cordillera which had nurtured the young child. He saw his chance when a boat-load of Makiritari put in at Maripa, and returned with them to the Merevari, where he had no difficulty in getting in touch with his own people—for in intervals between battles they explored the Merevari, the Curutu and all the streams rising on the Uasa-Coco watershed.

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'I am Uaremu,' he declared to his Guayca kinsmen, who looked on him with hostile eyes because he was wearing trousers, 'Uaremu, son of Mesmi. I was here as a boy. A long time I have been with "the rationals" [the civilized men] and I have grown to manhood. You are my people.'

His turning up in this fashion had a touch of the fabulous about it, and his kinsmen took him along without ill-treating him. When they found him to be a man of many accomplishments, and the old men remembered how he had disappeared during Uegna's time, after an encounter with the Samatari from the Aracoua lands, they kept him with them as their rightful chief, giving him unlimited freedom of action. As his obedient subjects they left it all to him.

Uaremu had never taken to civilization. For him, it had lacked something. What it had lacked, we cannot guess: the civilization of the Lower Guiana rivers may be bounded by the cloth hammock and the bottle of rum, the loose woman and the pack of cards, but it cannot be ranked any lower than the barbarianism of the Guayca, eaters of worms and snakes. But now, after his experience of life with 'the rationals', neither could the young man endure the ceaseless warfare which engaged his own peoples. The broken heads he saw round the fire in the evenings, the howls of the medicine-men at their exorcisings—all this was anathema to him. He told his kinsfolk they had better put it all aside, and grow something. From the Soto they could obtain seeds and roots. Much manioc was needed, because without it one was always hungry. Sugar-cane was a pleasant thing to suck at any time, and the children loved it. Above all, there must be bananas, as far as eye could see—the forest must be transformed into a huge garden of fruits, there for the picking. Thus, with his head full of ideas which owed their origin to the years he had spent in civilization, Luis Antonio founded a new Guayca people. They were Guayca Indians no longer, but peasants—peasants who cared for the tilling of the soil and a sure supply of food. These Guayca called themselves after him, Uaremu. They inhabited two big homesteads an hour distant from the Merevari river—a little above the mouth of the Canaracuni.

Now Luis Antonio wanted to stay with us and work, because he needed cloth for his people. We gave him what little we had been able to save from the greedy hands of Pancho's men, and he went off for a brief visit to his tribe, intending to return to Kiriochi in four days' time.

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especially strong and intelligent, and keep him at his side, adopting him, as it were, as his successor. The little girls continue to live in the feminine world of their tribe. Shy and submissive, they take on the humblest tasks, fetching water, making the fire and helping in the preparation—highly problematical—of food.

Such definitions of customs have, however, only a relative value, like any attempt to estimate the Shirian way of life: for Shiriana are to be found spread over wild territory of vast extent. Their customs are less well defined than one might suppose after reading certain tracts about primitive peoples—the Pacific islanders, for instance. These give the impression that with slight formal changes only, Western culture might have much to learn from the degree of social organization they have attained to. The Shirian tribes, cut off from one another as they are by physical barriers such as mountains and rivers, and moral barriers like the ceaseless state of war which exists between the various branches of this race of 'howling Indians', have developed their own customs in their own sporadic fashion. Sometimes they have been weakened by contact with foreigners, such as the Makiritari in the north-west and the Makushi in the east. More often they have been weakened by a lack of strong traditions, which do not spring easily from such an excessively low level of culture, where mere survival calls for an unending struggle against the tremendous power of the eternally hostile forest.

The most primitive races are those most affected by their geographical setting. Their environment conditions them. Only by adapting themselves continually to their surroundings, only by the long process of response to the determining factor of geography, can they create that growing racial identity which at last succeeds in reversing the process—that is, in conditioning the surroundings instead of being conditioned by them. But we are here touching on the larger question of the development of civilization generally.

Where the Shirians are concerned, we are still at the beginning of the beginning, when geography is the absolute determining factor. Here environment is the master of man—a creature inferior, qualitatively and quantitatively, to the region which it is his fate to inhabit.

The territory they occupy is immense. Divided though it may be by great cordilleras, which make it the breeding ground for various rivers rushing north, west and south, it possesses one marked characteristic throughout its whole extent: the sources and the headwaters of the rivers are contained in a sort of

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'So long as they don't break it!' I laughed cheerfully. But the Indian's doleful look discouraged my levity.

Luis Antonio told me that the existence of guns was no secret to the Samatari. They knew they were weapons, but had no idea how they worked. It all went back to a story we had heard on the Canaracuni, which had the clear ring of truth, though we had been unable to establish the date of the events.

A Brazilian expedition, possibly *garimpeiros*, or diamond seekers, had once gone up the Uraricoera river in a boat with a motor. They were probably about as far up from the mouth as we were now on the Samatari river—the Aracoça. These were the first civilized men ever to venture into the region, and they were well armed, as Brazilians living in forested areas generally are—in this respect differing greatly from the Venezuelans who never bother to carry more than some old gun and a stick. The four of them were going up the river with this outboard motor craft when they were hailed from the bank by a group of Indians. They brought the boat round, and as the bows touched the shore the Indians sent a well-aimed volley of arrows which struck the three Brazilians sitting for'ard. The man at the motor then fired a few shots, with what weapon I don't know, and in his turn laid low a number of Indians—four, to be exact, according to the version we heard. He then managed to swing the boat round and went back down river at full speed, eventually getting away to safety.

This was the occasion on which the Indians had got to know of guns and firearms in general, in all their terrible efficiency. But their knowledge was not to be limited to this. After a hair-raising trip the survivor reached Boa Vista, the capital of the Federal Territory of Rio Branco. There he told his tale, and authority very soon decided to take measures—and when Brazil takes such measures they are very stern. They sent out two planes, with the survivor to do the path-finding, and when they reached the approximate scene of the affray they looked for traces of Indian camps. These they bombed and machine-gunned, 'many times killing the hands and feet of the Shirians' as we were told by the Makiritari at Canaracuni, these latter being obviously quite pleased about it. From that time onwards, guns and bombs from the air were awe-inspiring bogeys, and in this connection I found myself thinking of Uaremu's threats to Pancho at the Llantarigña landing. And in our hearts we couldn't but feel grateful towards the Brazilians whose stern measures had seen to it that the voice of the clothes-wearing men had reached as far as these strange apo-men we were with now.

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When I showed Manuera how to start a fire with a big magnifying glass he understood immediately that the process must involve some direct relationship with the sun, but the others missed this point. They tried to make the big magic work indoors, in the shade. Our old guide therefore became the lens-expert, and amused himself for a whole day burning off the savannah—until he endangered the hut itself by firing some freshly cut straw which we had piled up on the south side.

We had already made some tentative and tactful inquiries of Pedro about forming a Makiritari crew to take us at least as far as the higher reaches of the Merevari, where we might find other Indians with whose help we could reach Frenario, on the Yevarehuri. The Makiritari were ready to start off at once—though this was highly unusual for them—and a crew got together quickly, with Pedro as steersman. Tomasso, his son, and four other strong Soto would paddle. Recruiting proceeded rapidly—too rapidly, and therefore obviously prearranged. Pedro naïvely confirmed our suspicions when he told us we should move off quickly and not wait for Pancho. Now we had expressly said that we wanted to send for Pancho to accompany us, because we knew that to have a chief with us would increase the prestige of the expedition in the eyes of other tribes.

'Not wait for Pancho,' declared Pedro. 'Pancho has much merchandise because he stopped so long to work at La Paragua. I, Pedro, know the way and have no merchandise.' Whereupon Pedro's discourse began to centre on the good old red cloth, and it appeared that our man wanted a whole piece. 'Much cloth, yes, little cloth no use. Pedro wants a whole piece of cloth, then he will start for the Merevari, long trip, we need to sleep many times.'

If the Makiritari had been quick off the mark to accept the assignment, they were equally tough when it came to terms. We closed the door of the hut, to avoid misunderstandings, and began a big hand-out: red cloth, machetes, fish-hooks, knives, rope and so on and so on... all in amazing quantities, the like of which had never been seen in these parts.

Silently the Makiritari surveyed the rising piles of merchandise on the earth floor. With their usual dourness they asked for more still, while the Shirians outside tried to see what was going on through the gaps in the wall, howling with deep emotion at the sight of such vast acreages of red cotton passing into the Soto's rapacious hands. A store of goods like that would have set in motion every Shirian from the Caura to the Orinoco and enough battles would have

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema
Makiritare SS 20

The day after our Makiritari crew had gone we betook ourselves and all our bags and baggage into a Shirian settlement. They were friendly people, somewhat scared of us, and attentive to our every move. All in all, we weren't sorry to have missed Frenario, who would undoubtedly have turned out to be some mangy and pretentious imbecile, lording it over everybody like some Asiatic despot. In talking about it to my companion, I summed up my attitude thus: 'If you're going among the Makiritari, take Makiritari with you. If you're going among Shirians, take Shirians.'

The itinerary we wanted to cover wasn't perfectly clear, even to ourselves: after all, our journey was taking us through one of the least explored parts of the world. But it was certain, at any rate, that we should be crossing territory inhabited by Shirians (especially Samatari and Guayca). It was even more certain that we should meet with no Makiritari or other people full of sweetness and light.

That same evening we picked out the men we wanted to take with us—though it would be more correct to say that we had them wished on us, because in this settlement, which lay hidden on the left bank of the Yevarehuri, five or six bends down, there weren't a great many Indians fit for the job. These were peaceable Shirians, but their living conditions were some of the most wretched we'd ever seen. It was really as if by the very fact of having given up their warlike habits, these people had forfeited their right to live as well as possible. From warriors, these people had gone to the extreme and become anchorites.

One man didn't want to come without bringing his wife and child—and the medicine-man!—along too. What was more, as crew-leader we had a man of middle age who was morally head of the little clan, and something more. His wife, with a baby boy at her breast, would also be coming. Then there were two boys, one of fifteen or so, the other of more tender years. Altogether it was the queerest crew two explorers of unknown territories could ever have put their faith in.

To gain time, we wanted to set out straight away, but our people gave us to understand that we must wait a day because they had something important to do. In the meantime, while ostensibly preparing the loads, they were anxious to have a good look at the equipment we were carrying. We let them get on with it, until they came to the pack containing the good old red cloth and other objects which might have been too much of a temptation for them: at this

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

point, we pronounced that magic word 'work'—so potent that in the very act of pilfering, their hands were stayed.

We had brought with us a flask of mercury, for amalgamating metals, which aroused their curiosity—curiosity which turned to absolute amazement when they picked it up and became aware of its inordinate weight. By some dark and labyrinthine thought-processes, no doubt, they deduced that this terrible liquid constituted a bomb, and they drew back in horror shouting '*Bomba Amio*'.[1]

We didn't disillusion them. A little fear and dread disseminated among our porters might not be entirely without point, considering all the uncertain aspects of the journey and the curious make-up of these Indians. Yes, we said, that is the aeroplane bomb, and it would blow to pieces all the Samatari from the Parima, if they dared show themselves on our route. This greatly reassured the Shirians. At first they had been rather scared of meeting with an enemy, but now they could count on this terrifying weapon we had at our disposal, which would also increase their own prestige in the eyes of the nomad tribes.

That night, there were some strange noises in the hut, about thirty yards away from our hammocks. Something interesting seemed to be happening, so we put out our candle and, through our mosquito nets, watched a curious scene.

The medicine-man was surrounded by the rest of the Shirians. He was in his usual position for exorcism ceremonies—sitting in his hammock with his legs dangling over either side. The chief's wife had a bowl of water and was dissolving something in it—something she was taking from a cluster of banana leaves in her lap. When she had put in enough, she passed the bowl to her husband, who held it firmly, slightly raised. Then he waited. Suddenly, on an unexpectedly powerful note, a chant came from the medicine-man. Then the chief drank long draughts out of the bowl, came down from his hammock, and began to walk with a rhythmic, solemn step, round the fire. All the men then drank in turn: then the women. Then the babies at their breasts were made to touch the bowl with their lips. Now they were all marching behind the chief, with rapid, tiny steps that covered very little ground, while the medicine-man himself jumped from his hammock and brought up the rear.

We were watching the Drinking of the Ashes—a ceremony symbolic of

[1] Their rendering of the Spanish 'avion' (aeroplane bomb).

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

A vast and multiform horde it is that besieges the trees; a people millions strong, each one of whom wages its own small war and combines with the rest in the greater struggle.

IV

In the three brothers, all that was best in this wild region could truly be said to have found some form of expression. Their reactions were at times incomprehensible—sudden reflexes resulting from a life utterly different in every way from our own and in some degree akin to the animals'. They were always together, not mixing with the other Shirians and building their own little separate shelter. Every night, when work was finished, they came to us, rubbing themselves against us and indicating by gestures what goods they would like for their pay.

They had certain phobias, the most interesting being a fear of nails. Carmine always had a long nail handy, and each evening he would hammer it into one of the hut-poles to hang up his gun and cartridge-case. This produced a terrible effect on one of the brothers. He would stand and watch as if paralysed, for all the world as though the nail was being driven into his own forehead. If Carmine showed him the nail, holding it out to him, he would cry '*Ma, ma*' and run off to hide in his little hut. Generally, however, he was most friendly, even affectionate, towards us. Carmine had once rashly promised to cut his hair for him, and since a haircut for one meant a haircut for everybody and the expedition's only pair of scissors was precious, we lost a whole day while my companion gained some experience of the barber's trade. The Indians spent their time looking at themselves in the glass and examining each other's coiffure for defects which they wanted attended to at once.

In imitation of the tales the Shirians told, Carmine had invented a terrifying personage called Barabàn, a kinsman of his, who lived somewhere over the mountains. Barabàn made such an impression on everyone that the myth became a real moral weapon and came in very useful when the Indians needed a little prodding. When Carmine told his tale, in a mixture of Shirian, Makiritari, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian, they would listen with eyes like saucers, in curiosity and fear: 'Barabàn and a hundred robbers and a hundred fierce dogs—they live in the trees like monkeys—eat women and children, cooked—

Waica
Guaharibo

/434 cont./

199 Nevertheless, what distinguishes the Guajaribo as a
101 separate group from the Guaika, even more than the small differences in language, are certain differences in their habits and material culture.

101 The Guajaribo share a goodly portion of their habitation
• 197 zone with the Maquiritare /Makiritare/ Indians, who live to the north. As a result of this, it appears that they have adopted
[248] many things from Maquiritare culture; for example, they culti-
[352] vate yuca more than the /435/ Guaika do. Their cotton ham-
[342] mocks and those of the Guaika seem to be a simplified version
[484] of the ones which the Maquiritare make. They also build some few ranchos with double-sloped roofs. And, like the Maquiritare, they travel much farther than the Guaika.

191 A certain number of the Guajaribo are bilingual, and they
192 speak Maquiritare in their commercial relations. They have also adopted a certain number of Spanish words through the Maquiritare and through their outside contacts, which have been more numerous than the contacts which the Guaika of the Orinoco have had with outsiders.

101 The title "Guajaribo" seems to be a name given to this tribe by outsiders and adopted by them for commercial reasons. The Maquiritare call the Guajaribo "Shidishana" or "Shiriana." These names, Shidishana and Shiriana, are the ones which the Guajaribo themselves employ when they talk among themselves or when they talk with the Guaika and the Maquiritare.

Maps

126 I have not been able to find a map of the exact territory inhabited by the Guaika /Waica/ and Guajaribo /Guaharibo/
[114] tribes. For example, on most of the maps the Ocamo River is shown running almost parallel to the Padamo River, when in reality it runs almost parallel to the Orinoco River. I have corrected some of these errors, but my maps are still only approximations.

126 On the map of the local area of El Platanal, I have tried
628 to show the friendly and hostile relations between the settlements, as well as the approximate location of the Guaika

/453 cont./

276 Several varieties of "yupo," of different degrees of strength, are prepared with leaves, bark, and ashes of bark. In the form of powder, it is blown by another into the nose of the one using it. The helper is the one who blows it, but the one using it fills the little tube and consequently is the one responsible with regard to the amount taken.

The "yopo" is connected with their religion and must be taken in order to carry out most of the sorcery, magic, or spells. Nevertheless, some become so addicted to the drug that they take it in great quantities and remain under its influence from midday until evening almost every day.

"Yopo" greatly enlarges the pupil, to the point of almost covering the entire iris of the eye.

The intoxication which it produces is similar to that caused by alcohol, but the effect passes sooner. An excessive dose may leave a person flat on his back, foaming at the mouth, and without strength enough to get up or to resist anything which might be done to him.

291 Clothing

The item of clothing which is fundamental for both men and women is a cord tied around the waist. Men are not considered decently dressed if they do not have the penis held up by the foreskin by the aforementioned cord.

([177]) There is a desire to obtain trousers and shirts for protection against insects.

302 Ornaments

The predominant style of cutting the hair is that of shaving the upper part of the cranium, leaving a border of hair about five centimeters wide around it. The lower edge of /454/ this border of hair should come exactly to the upper edge of the ears and a short space above the eyebrows. The straighter and more abrupt the lines of the hair, the better is the haircut. Sometimes they let the hair grow over the whole head. Sometimes, in order to rid themselves of lice, they shave the entire head. The whole head may be shaved for other reasons as well.

/482 cont./

753 Any strange or rare object can be considered to have given rise to an epidemic. According to their knowledge and understanding, it might be some kind of foreign sorcery.

755 The Guaika appreciate our medicine for the treatment of
• 177 sores and sicknesses, but for them this medicine is simply another enchanted or magical substance.

752 /483/ The treatment which they use for a bee sting is to tie the member thus hurt with a piece of vine or string above the sting. They also suck the poison out of the wound.

The treatment for the bite of a spider or snake is similar, tying and sucking. Later, the croonings are considered appropriate for driving away evil forces.

If a man is wounded by a poisoned dart, the wound is sucked and he will live. If he is wounded where the poison cannot be sucked out, he will quickly die. When an animal or a man is mortally wounded by a poisoned arrow, he falls, loses control of his muscles, and then dies, shuddering, perhaps when the poison reaches the heart or lungs.

751 One who has killed an enemy on a raid must sit down on
729 the ground and, taking a little piece of vine (perhaps some two centimeters in length), has to scrape one side of his own head in different places. If he fails to do this, some evil may overtake him.

755 Sick persons receive all possible care, in addition to all the
758 incantations and exorcisms which are cast against the opposing forces of the spirits.

758 A sick person is well fed. If it is not possible for him to take certain foods, the Guaika will make every possible effort to get for him what he can eat.

An old woman who had an infection in her mouth and a throat so large that it was almost impossible for her to swallow anything was given honey as food. They tipped her head back and poured the honey into her mouth. They had a fire lighted for her all the time, and someone was with her constantly. When the settlement moved, she was carried on a man's back by means of a strap or cord such as is customarily used for loads or small children.

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ 18

Orinoco to the Guaharibo Rapids. On this the river's course is given in great detail, showing not only the major tributaries but a great many minor ones as well, though there is no indication of their size. From first-hand experience it was clear to us that the contribution of some of the lesser tributaries was anything but negligible. There are, for instance, the Iguapo, which joins the Orinoco from the right ten miles above Esmeralda after itself being joined by a river its own size, and another river, unnamed as far as I know, which has its mouth midway between the Padamo and the Ocamo. And entering from the other bank come the Lipe and the Icipe, of which the latter is eighty yards wide at the confluence. Of these four only the Iguapo has been explored and that by Diez de la Fuente.

Above the Mavaca the Orinoco's mean width is less than two hundred yards. Its general direction of flow is east to west with a slight northern tendency and surprisingly, since it nowhere else does so in its thousand miles journey from Mavaca to the sea, it twists and turns pronouncedly.

Since we had left Esmeralda the only birds we had seen were single specimens of black ibis, large kingfishers and droves of white egrets. The egrets would sit craning their necks in the trees and, as we approached, would fly up only to settle down a little farther away. It was as though no human being had ever disturbed their forests. Once or twice we saw a pair of otters diving from a rock or dead tree stump and once we shot at an anaconda which was placidly coiled round a tree. We watched as it slowly unwound and disappeared into the murky water.

That evening we took one of the *curiaras* up a small tributary and fished, but the spate was too strong. Instead of fish we gathered some forest cocoa whose pulp is a refreshing drink when newly made.

The First Waikas

The Padamo and Ocamo rivers are inhabited by Guaharibos. Above the Ocamo, the inhabitants of the Orinoco's banks call themselves Waikas. They closely resemble the Guaharibos we had met at Esmeralda but are, perhaps, a little more primitive. Some had had previous contact with Butrón's wood-cutters.

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

his jungle intimately—where to find palm dates, cocoa and brazil nuts in their season, and where game birds are most plentifully found. He hunts the herds of peccary, his ear, versed in all the sounds of the forest, detecting his prey before they detect him. When the water in the rivers is low he shoots his fish with arrows and when the sand banks are uncovered he hunts tortoise eggs buried in the sand. His interminable wanderings are limited only by his forest lore; he lives only for the day, his sole reserve of food being a small store of bananas brought from the village plantation.

Platanal

As we closed the shore our reception was tumultuous. From the high bank above us the Indians leaped yelling into the water and clambered on board, shaking themselves like wet dogs. Laughing and gesticulating they took hold of our mooring lines. Though some of us were a little overcome by this display of exuberance, Butrón was not in the least disconcerted. He knew that the Indians had long learned to associate him with machetes and *manioc*. As soon as it was possible to do so, Butrón had a basket of *manioc* and a dozen machetes carried ashore, and the Indians who had already begun to ransack our cargo left it and hurried ashore.

"*Shori! Manioco! Oji!*" they cried striking their bellies. They jostled round the basket, stuffing handfuls of the coarse flour into their mouths, their heads thrown back in ecstasy.

As the Waĩka have no knowledge of contriving the simplest of iron tools, or of grinding *manioc*, all such articles were highly valued objects of barter. So were matches, once they had been shown how to use them.

Butrón told them we wanted the large green bananas which are eaten cooked; the accepted tariff is three hands of bananas for one machete. Before long, we heard some of the natives making merry in the plantation, and made as if to follow them. But at once the others became suspicious and gestured to us to return to the river bank. We insisted and they became menacing, finally refusing to go on gathering the bananas if we did not desist.

Numerically, the Yąnomamö[33] are one of the largest unacculturated tribes in South America, having a total population that approaches 10,000 in both Venezuela and Brazil. Most Yąnomamö live in Venezuela, occupying the area drained by the upper Orinoco, Mavaca, Manaviche, Ocamo, Padamo and Ventuari Rivers in the state of Amazonas, and the headwaters of the Caura and Paragua rivers of Estado Bolivar. In several drainages (Paragua, Caura, Ventuari and Padamo) the Yąnomamö are in contact with other tribes speaking Carib languages (Makiritare and Arekuna or Taulipang), from whom the Yąnomamö have traditionally obtained steel tools in trade and from whom a number of culture traits have been borrowed. Zerries has painstakingly analyzed these traits in his 1964 work.

No systematic census has been made of the entire Yąnomamö language family, although James P. Barker was commissioned by the Venezuelan Government to compile a census of the Yąnomamö occupying the Amazonas territory of that country. By both actual head-count and estimates of village size for groups that topography prevented him from visiting, Barker presently estimates the Venezuelan Amazonas Yąnomamö population to be well over 7,000.[1]

The population in Amazonas is distributed in some 80 to 100 villages, averaging between 60 and 100 people per village.[2] Villages occasionally contain as few as 40 people

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[1] Personal communication. See Zerries (1964:5) for a discussion of Yąnomamö population size. He concludes that the Yąnomamö are ". . . the largest yet unacculturated aboriginal group in tropical South America." (Ibid. My translation.)

[2] The relationship to warfare tactics and village size is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

35| large entrance, that leading to the river or stream. All entrances are covered with dry leaves and brush in the evening and the slightest movement of the covering creates sufficient noise to alert the dogs.

133 [137] The Yąnomamö occupy a relatively homogeneous geographical region of low-lying tropical jungle interrupted by densely-wooded hills that sometimes reach an altitude of 2,500 feet, some 2,000 feet above the elevation of the general

36| [133] [484] terrain. Larger hills are more common in the headwaters of the Orinoco and along the boundaries separating Brazil from Venezuela, but the Indians prefer to make their villages in the lowlands on small streams, as all of their travelling is done on foot. Only recently have the Yąnomamö begun moving [179] to the larger rivers, where they may obtain canoes and steel tools from foreigners. In 1950 there was only one Yąnomamö village, Mahekodo-tedi, on a navigable portion of the Orinoco River; since then at least seven or eight villages have moved to the Orinoco or one of its larger tributaries in order to gain access to trade goods (axes and machetes) foreign to their culture. The overwhelming number of Yąnomamö villages, [221] however, can only be reached by walking to them. During the [181] wet season (April-September) travel all but ceases between villages because the trails linking villages are inundated.

24| The Yąnomamö are slash-and-burn horticulturists, subsisting mainly on plantains and bananas, of which they cultivate four or five varieties each. Following these crops in economic importance are several root crops, including taro,

000(lapa, Spanish).

222 The collection of small fruits, spiders, ant grubs, wild honey, crabs, mushrooms and fish also contributes variety to the Yąnomamö diet.

241 268 [146] Cultivated foods contribute the greater proportion of calories to the Yąnomamö diet, probably upwards of 85%, [177] although this figure would vary seasonally. Again, those Yąnomamö villages living close to Makiritare settlements cultivate much more yucca (manioc) than platanos, refining it in some cases to meal as do the Makiritares. Elsewhere [252] the Yąnomamö eat their yucca roasted or boiled or make cassave bread by a technique quite distinct from that employed by the Makiritare.

722 [422] Yąnomamö material culture is very much attenuated by comparison with, for example, Makiritare. The Yąnomamö like to limit their possessions to an amount that is readily transported by the women, because the entire village may be obliged at any given moment to abandon its site to avoid raiders, or may be invited to a feast at another village. [422] [574] They do not like to leave possessions in their village when they leave it, as visitors from other villages would take them. And, their warfare pattern precludes the possibility of leaving a few people behind to guard the village, as they [361] would be easily overwhelmed by a raiding party. When just a portion of the village leaves to visit another group, those that stay behind move into the jungle some distance from the village and live in well-concealed huts until their co-

484 plantains to eat en route. Most of the time they did not even carry their hammocks, as these could be easily manufactured from bark strips in a matter of minutes.

[468] [935] Women make several kinds of baskets, including ones to carry the family possessions when the group moves. When the entire village moves, progress is slow and only a few miles are covered each day. The reason for this is that [838] [458] [955] elder people and those who are sick travel very slowly, children must be carried by their parents, and food in large quantities must be transported to provision the moving group. Thus, a trip that a group of young men could easily make in one day would require two or three days if the entire village moved that distance.

415 323 The only non-portable[1] (as well as the only durable) item made by the Yąnomamö is a large, heavy, poorly fired [[84] [473] clay pot. These are manufactured by only a few villages, which serve as trading centers for this industry. They are [462] [422] [562] made by men and are their property since women are too clumsy to be permitted to handle and use them and would probably break them. When a pot does break, the fragments are used as mortars for grinding drugs, small stone celts, found in the woods by the Yąnomamö, serving as pestles. The larger fragments of a broken pot are used as cooking plates in the [199] manufacture of cassave bread. Despite the fact that most of the Yąnomamö villages have not been contacted directly, the

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[1] The pots are concealed in the garden when the group moves.

415 clay pots are rapidly being replaced by aluminum ware sup-
323
177 plied to the few villages in contact with foreigners. These
[439] aluminum pots enter the exchange networks and ultimately
[438] reach virtually every village, as do machetes, axes, knives, glass beads, and fishhooks.

291 Clothing for men is limited to cotton strings around the wrist, ankles, knees, and waist; the foreskin of the penis is tied to the waist string. Occasionally men wear a string around their upper torso that crosses at both the chest and the back, and a thick cotton belt, circular in
301 cross-section, around the waist. Scalps of wild turkeys are
237 worn as fore-arm bands, to which are tied clusters of feathers
[304] that dangle from a string a foot or so in length. Men perforate the lower lip and the ear lobes; they wear a small feather in the lip and short pieces of arrow cane through their ear lobes, occasionally embellished with colored
302 feathers. Both sexes cover their bodies with red pigment and shave the tops of their heads, the latter being more common
[514] among the women. The men shave the tops of their heads to
[599] display their numerous scalp wounds, evidence of fierceness in club fights.

291 Younger women wear a cotton waist band, thick cotton armbands, circular in cross-section, a harness of cotton strings on their upper torso that crosses between the breasts and at the back, and single strings around their ankles and
[304] below their knees. Women pierce their ear lobes, the corners
[301] of their mouth, lower lip, and nasal septum. Arrow shaft

raiding each other.[1]

That the shortage of women is the basis of internal feuding is illustrated by a practice recently adopted by members of the New Tribes Mission working in the village of Kosholowë-tedi, a small village on the Padamo River. The missionaries had a major problem with club-fighting within the village, most of which developed out of sexual liasons between married women and married men. The missionaries began an active campaign aimed at changing the coitus taboos during pregnancy and lactation. They were successful in their efforts, and the major result was that fighting was almost completely stopped. (Another result was a sharp increase in births.)

Village size and composition have an effect on the number of sexual liaisons within a village, as illicit affairs are more difficult to discover in large villages. The Bisaasi-tedi and the Monou-tedi, as can be seen from Table 1, have less of a woman shortage than the other villages. Nevertheless, fights over women do break out in these villages. One of the clubfights I witnessed took place between two groups of Monou-tedi men in the village of Bisaasi-tedi. One of the Monou-tedi men had wanted to carry on an affair with the wife of Konoreiwë, another man of his village, but was unable to do so while the Monou-tedi lived in their own village. Once when the Monou-tedi moved to Bisaasi-tedi to

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[1] See Chapter 5, Tables 5 and 6, for a summary of the causes of village splits and hostilities.

10:Chagnon E-4.5 (1984-1988) 1987 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

174 remained on good terms with each other. Their split occur-
175 *621 *628 red in 1954, perhaps a year earlier.

When I initiated my field work in 1964 Monou-tika was still occupied, but its population, the Monou-tedi, was in the process of making a new garden (Moyanabŏwei) east of Monou to avoid the raids of the Patanowä-tedi, with whom they had entered into a new war in 1964.

175 The faction that moved to Barawä remained at that
177 site about five years. They moved to the mouth of the Mavaca
361 River, taking the name Bisaasi-tedi, in 1959, splitting into
648 two villages, each located on opposite banks of the Mavaca
[621] River. By 1958 the Venezuelan Government had initiated a malaria-control program in this area of Amazonas and had established a small field station at the mouth of the Mavaca River. Venezuelans associated with this field station invited the Barawä-tedi to move to the Mavaca River; the Indians accepted the invitation, hoping to gain access to steel tools. This was the beginning of contact with outsiders for the Kreibŏwei-tedi; prior to 1959 the only foreigners they had known were the missionary at Mahekodo-tedi, James P. Barker, and the members of the Frobenius Institute Expedition, Meinhard Schuster and Otto Zerries, who they visited occasionally at Mahekodo-tedi.

174 Area 12: Bisaasi-tedi
175 *628 361

The Bisaasi-tedi began friendly contacts with a Shamatari village, Paruritawä-tedi, after they moved to the mouth of the Mavaca River.

[Paruritawë-tedi Group]

It will be immediately apparent that the Shamatari village histories are more complicated than the one outlined for the Namowei-tedi. This stems from the fact that the Shamatari villages had reached a large size by 1900 and began splitting into smaller groups earlier, in terms of the data I collected, than did the Namowei-tedi. In other words, the splitting that characterized Namowei-tedi's population from about 1940 to 1955 was occurring in the Shamatari population in 1900. Although I do not have census data on the numerous Shamatari villages that subsequently emerged from the two initial groups, I suspect that the numbers of people involved are significantly larger for the Shamatari village histories. Two factors seem to be the cause of this phenomenon. First, the Shamatari villages had access to steel tools in considerable numbers before Namowei-tedi's ancestral population did; my informants asserted that their first source of steel tools was the group called Shihowë-tedi. Presumably the size of the populations involved is a function of their agricultural potentials, and the Shamatari apparently expanded earlier than the Namowei-tedi because they had access to steel tools sooner. Secondly, the Shamatari population expanded unopposed into virgin territory, whereas the Namowei-tedi expanded into territory already occupied by other Yanomamö; it is significant to note that when the Namowei-tedi ultimately moved into unoccupied territory, their population seems to have increased, and the first split occurred only after virgin territory was colonized.[1]

[1] I am unable to explain how this affects demographic variables, but my data suggest that Yanomamö populations expand more rapidly when they colonize virgin land.

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[128]

Summary

Tables 5 and 6 broadly summarize the movements of the five villages. As the details of the text indicate, considerably more village movement goes on than can be included in tables of this sort. The micro-movements, however, merely express in greater detail what is immediately apparent from an examination of Tables 5 and 6: the Yanomamö abandon their gardens and move to new locations because of raids from other groups. In only one instance was the movement of a village stimulated by economic considerations: site 4 was abandoned by the Namowei-tedi because of poor soil. Another exception was the abandoning of Barawä (site 10) by the Bisaasi-tedi in 1959. They moved to the mouth of the Mavaca River to gain access to steel tools, marking the beginning of their sustained contact with foreigners.

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+628
721

The tables also show that there were ten village splits relevant to explaining the origins of the five villages considered in this chapter. Five of these splits were due to feuds over women. In four of the cases the factions that were involved immediately entered into hostilities with each other. The recent split within Patanowä-tedi, discussed in the text (pp. 188-89), again over a woman, is not included in Table 5, as the refugee group did not form a new village of their own. Three village splits in Tables 5 and 6 developed out of minor feuds, usually over women, brought about by large village size. In one case, the factions ultimately entered into hostilities with each other, whereas in two cases the factions still remain on friendly terms.

10xChagnon E-4.8 (1964-1968) 1967 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

likelihood that marriage practices will depart from the rules governing ideal marriage behavior, then we would expect a reduction in warfare to produce a reduction of this gap. A decrease in warfare should obviate the need for military alliances validated by exchanges of women; under such conditions marriage practice should conform more closely to preferential rules.

The Yąnomamö who live on the Upper Uraricoera and Uraricaá rivers of northern Brazil differ markedly in a number of traits from the Venezuelan Yąnomamö of the Mavaca basin considered in this thesis. A major point of difference is that among the former warfare is much less common than it is among the Yąnomamö described in the preceding chapters. It is likely that this reduction in warfare is partly due to more frequent contact of the Brazilian Yąnomamö with Carib-speaking Indian tribes (Makiritare and Arekuna) and, since 1958, with Christian missions. There appears to be a cline in the decreasing intensity of warfare from southwest, the area in which I conducted my field work, to northeast, the area from which these new data are drawn (see Map D, next page). Yąnomamö from the Upper Padamo River, an area about on the mid-point of this cline, told me that fighting with clubs was very rare in their villages. Migliazza[1] asserts that raiding between villages on the Uraricoera River occurs only every four or five years and is usually provoked by

[1] Personal communication.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195]

occupying five different sites, each having its own house and garden. These five groups recombined into a single unitary village only when warfare threatened. To the southwest of the Uraricaá area, in the headwaters of the Parima River, the villages tend to be larger and more nucleated. On the Upper Parima River villages have a permanent centralized site to which the dispersed extended families may retreat when raids are imminent. Warfare is more common in this area than on the Uraricaá. The Parima Mountains separate this group of Yąnomamö from those whose social organization is described in this thesis. Southwest of the Parima Mountains intensity of warfare is similar to that found in the Mavaca basin. Corresponding to this increase in intensity is a change in type of settlement: palisaded villages are general southwest of the Parima Mountains, whereas they are found only sporadically or not at all to the northeast.

There is likewise an apparent cline in population density isomorphic with the cline in warfare intensity. Yąnomamö villages in Brazil are progressively smaller and more widely scattered as one proceeds northeastward from the Parima Mountains. It is tempting to correlate the reduction in warfare intensity with the demographic pattern. However, another factor complicates the picture: the Yąnomamö have more contact with other tribes (Makiritare and Arekuna) in the northeast extension of their territory; in many cases they live in the same villages with these tribes. I suspect that the contact they have with the Carib-speaking groups also

184 648 721 contributes to the reduction in the intensity of warfare. This stems from the fact that the Caribs have long had access to firearms, and the Yąnomamö avoid attacking Carib villages. [411] [179] It is not likely that Yąnomamö villages settled close to or among Caribs would be raided by other Yąnomamö, for the Caribs would either defend their co-residents or provide them with firearms to retaliate. Certainly, I know of no cases of Yąnomamö villages mounting raids on other Yąnomamö who live near or among Carib Indians.

184 562 * 62 * 628 578 721 Throughout the thesis I have emphasized the causal relationship between the shortage of women and the development of hostilities within and between villages. The same relationship appears to hold in the Uraricaá area, as the following incident illustrates. The missionaries discovered 721 * 628 562 926 799 177 [595] that one of the Yąnomamö women had two husbands. They felt that this was an unacceptable situation and persuaded the woman that she should abandon one of the men. This man then could not find another eligible woman of the appropriate age and relationship to marry, so he organized a party of men to accompany him on a wife-hunting trip to a neighboring, but unrelated, village. On arriving he informed the people that he had come to teach them a new and powerful institution, prayer, which he had learned from the missionaries. He had his hosts kneel and bow their heads; then he and his companions fell upon them with machetes and killed them. The visitors seized the hosts' women and fled. In an area where warfare is rare, this incident indelibly underscores the

10:Chagnon E-4.5 (1964-1966) 1967 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

relationship between the shortage of women and the initiation of inter-village hostilities.[1]

One conclusion I reach, therefore, is that the frequency of hostilities within and between villages varies directly with the opportunities for males to satisfy their sexual desires in a socially acceptable way. In other words, internal village fighting and inter-village warfare should diminish in proportion to the increase in number of women to which each man has sexual access. Several kinds of data support this conclusion. First, the histories of the five villages and the data on village movements and warfare during 1964-66 show that most village splitting and most village warfare arise from feuds over women. Second, there was no fighting within Lower Bisaasi-tedi during the 15 months of my field work. This village has no adult bachelors, and has a male/female sex-ratio close to 1.0. Third, when missionaries changed the Yąnomamö attitudes toward coitus with pregnant and lactating women in one village, internal feuding reduced markedly.[2] Fourth, the data from the Uraricaá Yąnomamö on extra-marital sexual relationships imply that

[1] I cite this incident because it is an unambiguous--perhaps even classic--example of a war developing due to a shortage of women. I am in no sense criticizing the missionaries; they can not be held responsible for the violent nature of their charges in this or any other case. Their kindness and good example have, in a number of cases with which I am familiar, prevented bloodshed among the Indians.

[2] Personal communication from Mr. Wallace Jank, a New Tribes Missionary working among the Yąnomamö on the Padamo River.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1988 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

1

Doing Fieldwork among the Yąnomamö

THE YĄNOMAMÖ[1] INDIANS live in southern Venezuela and the adjacent portions of northern Brazil (see frontispiece map, p. iv). Some 125 widely scattered villages have populations ranging from 40 to 250 inhabitants, with 75 to 80 people the most usual number. In total numbers their population probably approaches 10,000 people, but this is merely a guess. Many of the villages have not yet been contacted by outsiders, and nobody knows for sure exactly how many uncontacted villages there are, or how many people live in them. By comparison to African or Melanesian tribes, the Yąnomamö population is small. Still, they are one of the largest unacculturated tribes left in all of South America.

But they have a significance apart from tribal size and cultural purity: the Yąnomamö are still actively conducting warfare. It is in the nature of man to fight, according to one of their myths, because the blood of "Moon" spilled on this layer of the cosmos, causing men to become fierce. I describe the Yąnomamö as "the fierce people" because that is the most accurate single phrase that describes them. That is how they conceive themselves to be, and that is how they would like others to think of them.

I spent nineteen months with the Yąnomamö,[2] during which time I acquired some proficiency in their language and, up to a point, submerged myself in their culture and way of life.

[1]The word Yąnomamö is nasalized through its entire length, indicated by the diacritical mark [ą]. When this mark appears on a word, the entire word is nasalized. The terminal vowel [-ö] represents a sound that does not occur in the English language. It corresponds to the phone [ə] of linguistic orthography. In normal conversation, Yąnomamö is pronounced like "Yah-no-mama," except that it is nasalized. Finally, the words having the [-ä] vowel are pronounced as that vowel with the "uh" sound of "duck." Thus, the name Kąobawä would be pronounced "cow-ba-wuh," again nasalized.

[2]I spent a total of twenty-three months in South America of which nineteen were spent among the Yąnomamö on three separate field trips. The first trip, November 1964 through February 1966, was to Venezuela. During this time I spent thirteen months in direct contact with the Yąnomamö, using my periodic trips back to Caracas to visit my family and to collate the genealogical data I had collected up to that point. On my second trip, January through March 1967, I spent two months among Brazilian Yąnomamö and one more month with the Venezuelan Yąnomamö. Finally, I returned to Venezuela for three more months among the Yąnomamö, January through April 1968.

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removed and laid along the ground in the direction of the burrow to measure the distance from the entrance. The men began digging at the end of the vine and located the asphyxiated armadillo on the first attempt.

The jungle provides many other kinds of foods and products too numerous to mention. Some, like vines and lianas, are very useful and commonly employed in basket-making; others, such as edible mushrooms, crabs, pigments, and decorative plant products, are less significant, and exploited only sporadically. Despite the amazing variety of food products to be found in the jungle, however, the Yąnomamö could not exist for any substantial period of time on collected foods only: they rely heavily on their cultivated crops. The tropical forest is much less productive and reliable than one would imagine. The most abundant foods, palm fruits, are seasonal—a group of people could only rely on them for a few months of the year, during which time some 80 group members would have to forage over a wide area to obtain sufficient palm fruits to keep everybody well fed.

Game animals are not abundant, and an area is rapidly hunted out, so that a group must keep constantly on the move. Furthermore, hunting depends as much on luck as it does on skill and is not a very reliable way to supply nourishment. I have gone on five-day hunting trips with the Yąnomamö in areas that had not been hunted for decades, and had we not brought cultivated foods along, we would have been extremely hungry at the end of this time—we did not collect even enough meat to feed ourselves. On other trips, we often managed to collect enough game in one day to feed the entire village.

GARDENING Although the Yąnomamö spend almost as much time hunting as they do gardening, the bulk of their diet comes from foods that are cultivated. Perhaps 85 percent or more of the diet consists of domesticated rather than wild foods—plantains are by far the most important food in the diet.

The Yąnomamö are constantly looking for potential garden sites. When I hunted with them, the topic of conversation that evening would eventually drift over to the merits of the area as a possible site for a new garden. Most new garden sites are, in fact, discovered by hunters.

The land for a new site should not be heavily covered with brush, which is difficult to remove. The larger trees should not be too numerous either, as it takes a good deal of work to chop them down. Ideally, the new site should have very light jungle cover, should be well drained, near a source of drinking water, and relatively free of thorny underbrush. The Yąnomamö call a garden *hikari täka;* jungle that has the potential of being a good garden is likewise called *hikari täka.*

The first operation in making a new garden is to cut the smaller trees and brush; the bigger trees, *kayaba hi,* are left standing until the underbrush is removed. Then the big trees are felled with axes and left lying on the ground to dry out in the sun.

My older informants claimed that they did not have steel tools when they were younger and had to kill the big trees by cutting a ring of bark off around the base of the stump, using a crude stone axe, piling brush around them, and burning them. The trees rarely fell, but the fire usually killed them, and their leaves dropped off, permitting the sunlight to reach the ground.

They also claimed that making a garden was more arduous in those days because a large area would have to be searched for the necessary quantities of kindling used to kill the big trees. Today, however, steel tools are quite common, being provided by the

Today, however, steel tools are quite common, being provided by the several missionaries who have recently located posts at a number of locations in Yąnomamö territory. The tools that they give to their local people are eventually traded inland to more remote villages so that all the Yąnomamö, even those who have not yet had any direct contact with outsiders, now have steel tools.[7] Before the missionaries arrived, the Yąnomamö occasionally obtained steel tools from the Carib-speaking Makiritare Indians, who have long been in contact with civilization. Some of the Makiritare made periodic canoe trips in the last century as far east as Georgetown in order to obtain these tools. Kąobawä told me that when he was a young man, his village had a single piece of steel, a portion of a broken machete that came ultimately from the Makiritare Indians by way of several intermediate Yąnomamö villages. Everybody in the village used this tool when they made their gardens. It was hafted on a split stick and used as an axe. I have seen broken machetes used in this fashion in the more remote, steel-poor villages.

The Yąnomamö usually fell the big trees toward the end of the wet season, although I have seen them do it at all times of the year. In general, the clearing of the land tends to be an activity of the wet season while the burning is done during the dry season, but this schedule is by no means rigorous. An adequate burning can be achieved at the peak of the rainy season, provided that there are two days of sunshine in succession. The dead brush and the leaves of the large trees dry out rather quickly in the sun, provided that they have been lying on the ground for a sufficiently long period of time. The trunks of the large trees are never burned, so that a newly cleared garden is strewn with logs lying helter-skelter all over the cleared patch. These serve as boundaries between individual gardens, as the crops belong to the person who plants them.

Each man clears his own land. Brothers will usually clear adjacent portions of land and, if their father is still living, his garden will be among theirs. The headman of the village generally has the largest garden, as he must produce larger quantities of food; he is obliged to give food away at feasts. He can frequently enlist the aid of other men to help him make a large garden. Kąobawä, for example, is helped by a younger brother, a brother-in-law, and the latter's son. Once in a while one of his sisters who lives in a different village visits for a long stretch of time, and her son-in-law also helps Kąobawä work in the garden during these visits.

After the brush has dried out and the larger trees felled, the portable timber and brush is gathered up into piles and burned, each man having several fires going in his own patch, to which he hauls the brush as he gathers it up. Usually, the fires are built under or next to one of the larger logs. In this way the logs dry out even more completely and can be easily chopped up by the women for firewood. The ashes are not scattered to improve soil fertility.

If the new site is a great distance from the previous garden, the men will have to make numerous trips between the two sites in order to transport the plantain cuttings. If an ally's village is closer to the new garden site, some cuttings can be borrowed from his gardens, thereby reducing the transportation labor. Each mature plantain or banana plant sends out suckers which sprout a few feet away from the adult stalk. When the Yąnomamö cut the bunch of plantains or bananas from the producing plant, they also cut the entire plant down to permit the younger suckers to receive the sunlight. The larger

[7] One missionary told me that he has given the residents of his village approximately 3000 machetes over the past eight years! These are traded inland to more remote Yąnomamö.

Many of the Yąnomamö villages have recently obtained bitter manioc, a poisonous variety that must be leached of its toxic ingredient before it can be eaten. This variety is grown in large quantities by the Carib-speaking Makiritare Indians-and by rural Venezuelans-and most of it has been introduced to the Yąnomamö recently by missionaries. Where the Yąnomamö are in direct contact with the Makiritare, they have, of course, adopted the crop without the intervention of the missionaries.

Next in importance are three other root crops: taro, sweet potatoes, and mapuey. All of these resemble potatoes; they are usually boiled, but occasionally they are roasted directly over the coals.

The Yąnomamö also cultivate a species of palm tree that produces a large crop of fruit each February and a much smaller crop in June. Each tree is owned by the individual who planted it, and his rights to the fruit continue even after the garden has been abandoned. It takes about six or seven years for a newly planted tree to produce its first crop, so the Yąnomamö are quite reluctant to move very far away from sites where they possess producing groves of these trees. When they do move, they return each year to collect the peach-palm fruit. They try, as well, to move to an abandoned garden that still has producing peach palms. If thieves have been raiding the unguarded crop, the Yąnomamö may cut the trees down, keeping the wood to make bows. They would sooner destroy an item of personal property than permit others to exploit it without permission.

Maize is probably next in importance, but in a special sense. It appears to be cultivated as an emergency crop because its seeds are light and easily transported. A group that must move its garden a long distance can carry large quantities of maize seed and produce a substantial crop in a relatively short period of time. Maize does not, however, under normal circumstances, figure prominently in the daily diet of the Yąnomamö.

Cane for arrow manufacturing is also grown. The mature plant consists of a long, slender, pithy cane that has no joints or branches and is ideally suited for arrow shafts. The Yąnomamö use the cane just as they harvest it. Their arrows are over 6 feet long. Wing feathers from the larger species of wild turkey are used to fletch the arrow. On each side of the shaft, one feather is tied with finely spun cotton fibers, being attached in such a way that the arrow will spin when it is released; its accuracy is thus improved in the way a bullet's accuracy is improved by rifling in a gun barrel. A nock is carved from wood with an agouti-tooth knife; it looks very much like a golf-ball tee when finished, except that it is grooved at the large end where it will be fitted to the bowstring. The nock is inserted in the narrow end of the cane and held fast with pitch adhesive and a tight wrapping of fine cotton thread. The large end of the cane is not altered if it is to take a curare tip, since it tapers to a fine point and, therefore, blends into the thin curare point. If the point to be mounted is of the lanceolate type, the tip of the cane is cut off at its maximum diameter, wrapped with heavy cord, and the point jammed into the cane pith with considerable force. The fiber wrapping prevents the cane from splitting while the point is being mounted. The finished product is a very handsome piece of work, and the Yąnomamö are proud of their arrows. They decorate the bamboo points by painting them red and adding black designs, and they attach a few colorful feathers to the fletched end. A seasoned arrow is a prized possession, in high demand in the trading network.

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The noreshi animals are inherited patrilineally for men and matrilineally for women.[12] Kąobawä, for example, inherited his *noreshi* animal, the black monkey, from his father and transmitted it to his son. All his male kinsmen have the black monkey as their *noreshi*. Bahimi, Kąobawä's wife, has the dog for her *noreshi* animal, as does her mother and her daughter by Kąobawä. The *noreshi* animal of a woman always travels on the ground below the animal of the husband.

Noreshi animals duplicate the behavior of the person to whom they correspond. When Kąobawä goes hunting, so does his *noreshi* animal. When he is sick, so is his *noreshi* animal. If he takes a journey of two days, the animal likewise travels an equal distance, and so forth.

The *noreshi* animal and the person to whom it corresponds are always in complementary distribution. That is, they never come close to each other, for if they should see each other, they would both die. Their mutual existences are coextensive and coterminous: One lives only as long as the other, and both die at precisely the same instant. If a hunter should shoot Kąobawä's *noreshi* animal and kill it, Kąobawä would also be shot and would die. Similarly, if Kąobawä is shot by raiders and killed, his *noreshi* animal would suffer the same fate.

The soul aspect of the *noreshi*, however, can leave the human body at will and wander. Sickness results when the *noreshi* has left the body; unless it is brought back soon, the person will die. The *noreshi* is the vulnerable portion of the complete being, the part that is the target of witchcraft and harmful magic. The shamans (*shabori*) wage constant war against the evil demons (*bekura*) of enemy groups who have been sent to capture the *noreshi* parts of children. They, in turn, send their own *bekura* to capture the *noreshi* of enemy children; the wars that take place between men who raid to kill are likewise carried over into the domain of the supernatural.

When sickness is deemed to be the result of soul loss, the people who are closely related to the sick person hunt for his *noreshi*. I participated in one of these soul hunts. Kąobawä's group had set up a temporary camp across the river from its main village site, as they suspected raiders would attack them. While they were camped in their temporary village, one of the children became ill, and her malady was thought to be caused by soul loss. When the threat of raiders passed, the temporary camp was abandoned and the group moved back into the main village.

The child's condition worsened, so a group of women and children returned to the temporary camp, suspecting that the *noreshi* had remained there. I went along and, with the others, cut a branch from a shrub and began sweeping the site and calling for the *noreshi* to return. We swept the entire area and converged at one point. Everybody was convinced that the *noreshi* had been herded into this central point. We then lured the *noreshi* back across the river and into the body of the sick child.

The vulnerability of the *noreshi* to magical spells is best examplified by the fact that the shamans of every village spend most of their time chanting to the *bekura* (demons) with the intention of persuading them either to attack the *noreshi* of other (enemy) children or to drive off the *bekura* sent by enemy shamans. Again, the Yąnomamö used two of their concepts of the soul to describe photographs and tape recordings. They were very hostile to me when I attempted to take photographs, especially of children, because

[12] The inheritance of these "alter-ego" animals has nothing to do with marriage rules and patrilineage exogamy.

774 I, in effect, was capturing the *noreshi* of the child: A photograph was called *noreshi*.[13]
825 Tape recordings, in contrast, were not considered to be harmful. If anything, they enjoyed
177 having me record their music and discussions, and always demanded that I play them
123 back for everyone to hear. The word used to describe a recording was *no ubudibö*, the part
126 of the soul that wanders in the jungle after the body is cremated. In short, only the *noreshi* aspect of the soul is vulnerable.

766 TREATMENT OF THE DEAD If a person dies in an epidemic, his body, along with those of the others who died, is placed on a tree platform and allowed to decay. After
[887] several months, an old man is appointed to strip the remaining decayed flesh from the bones and the bones are then cremated. The Yanomamö fear the smoke that is produced
[563] when a body is cremated, and since epidemics are feared, they do not take a chance on
[783] contaminating the houses, implements, and persons with the smoke produced by the burning bodies.

764 Under normal circumstances, the body of the deceased is placed on a pyre of logs, covered with additional wood, and allowed to burn until nothing but the large bones
[783] are left. The burning takes place in the village, usually in the afternoon. The children and
[562] women leave, as they are susceptible to contamination by the smoke. They all bathe
[858] carefully to wash off any possible contamination. Even the weapons are washed.

After the coals are cool enough to handle, the relatives sift the ashes meticulously with shallow, loosely woven baskets, collecting every bit of bone they can find. The charcoal of the wood is burned, lest a small piece of bone be mixed in with it. The accumulated bones are then ground in a log mortar, hollowed out by means of alternate burning and chopping. These logs are about 4 feet long and 6 to 8 inches in diameter.
[237] For grinding the bones of a male, white buzzard down is usually attached around the
[531] circumference of the mortar, and curved lines painted on the mortar with red pigment.
[562] The mortars used for females are not decorated as elaborately, but usually have decorative fibers of a palm tree, the kind used by women to decorate their perforated ears. Circles and dots are painted on the mortars of females.

The charred bones of the dead are placed, a few at a time, into the mortar and a
[531] long, slender pole is used as the pestle. These poles are about 6 feet long, 2 or 3 inches in diameter, and bear painted decorations. The bones are crushed into a black powder by a young man, while the relatives of the deceased sit around the mortar and weep profusely. The ground ashes are then transferred to hollow gourds through a small hole and
[266] sealed with wax and buzzard down. A little is left in the mortar and eaten, mixed with boiled plantain soup, on the day of the ceremony. The mortar is always burned after a ceremony.

769 About a year later, the rest of the ashes are eaten during a feast, again mixed with
266 boiled plantain soup. Occasionally, they will deliberately save some of the ashes, especially ashes of those who were killed in raids, making use of them for a number of cere-
[726] monies. Before each attempt at getting revenge, the raiders eat the ashes of their slain kinsman. This puts them into the appropriate state of rage for the business of killing enemies.

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[13]Many informants gave a more pragmatic explanation of their fear of the camera. They did not want to be reminded of their dead kinsman, and if I had a photograph of the person, this would be an extremely offensive reminder to his relatives that their loved one was dead.
[749]

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general area, but too hostile to remain together in a single village. Largely due to food theft, their mutual political relationships gradually worsened. The two groups returned to the old site in order to harvest the fruits of the cultivated peach-palm tree, as each tree is owned by the person who plants it. Some of the fruit belonging to a man in one of the groups was stolen by a man in the other group. This led to a club fight between the two villages, after which they parted on hostile terms. The group that included Kąobawä decided to abandon their new garden and establish another one further away, anticipating a raid from the other group. Ultimately, the members of the two villages began raiding each other and entered into a prolonged and bloody war that was still raging when I left the field in 1967.

About 1949, to avoid the Patanowä-teri raids, Kąobawä and his group moved to an even more remote location. From here, they began visiting one of the Shamatari villages, Iwahikoroba-teri, located to the south of them. Unfortunately, the people of Iwahikoroba-teri were allied to the Shamatari group (Ruwahiwä's village) with which Kąobawä's group was at war. At the instigation of Kąobawä's enemies, the Iwahikoroba-teri invited his group to a feast during which many of them were treacherously killed, including Kąobawä's father. This incident took place sometime in the period December-January of 1950–1951. The survivors, many of them badly wounded, fled to a newly cleared garden site they had established a day's walk north of their village. They returned to their village only to obtain food, which they carried back to their new but nonproducing garden. After the wounded had removed the arrow points and were on the road to recovery, the group moved back into their producing garden. By this time word of the treachery had spread to all the villages in the area. The headman of Mahekodo-teri, the only village located on the Orinoco River in 1950, visited Kąobawä's group and invited them to take refuge with his people.[15] Kąobawä and his group readily accepted the invitation, and they moved into Mahekodo-teri, knowing that they could prosecute the war with the Shamatari only if they had allies and could raid from a great distance. Their own village was too close to Shamatari territory, and their capacity to raid was greatly reduced after so many of their men had been killed.

Kąobawä knew that the generous offer from the Mahekodo-teri was not entirely stimulated by altruistic motives. In 1910 his group had been forced to take refuge with an ally because of a war; the ally demanded in return many of the guests' women. Similarly, the Mahekodo-teri coerced Kąobawä's group into ceding a number of women, the price a weakened and dependent village must pay for the support of a stronger ally. It was later learned that the Mahekodo-teri planned to kill the rest of the men and abduct all of the women, but an unexpected war delayed their plot. (See Chagnon 1966.) Two of Kąobawä's sisters were among those claimed by the Mahekodo-teri; one of them still lives there, and the other was taken away from her Mahekodo-teri husband by force by Rerebawä's brother.

Kąobawä and his group lived with their protectors off-and-on for about a year, while they worked assiduously at making their new gardens. Because of internal fighting, they decided to make two new gardens and form two separate villages. The year was

[15] James P. Barker of the New Tribes Mission had just moved into Mahekodo-teri a few months earlier, marking the beginning of the Yąnomamö's first sustained contact with any outsiders. He witnessed the arrival of Kąobawä's group.

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spent according to a schedule of work alternated with periods of rest. They would live in the Mahekodo-teri village for about three weeks at a stretch, resting from their gardening tasks, and return to their new gardens for about three weeks of intensive clearing and cultivation. Their plantings and seeds were provided by the Mahekodo-teri.[16] They carried their provisions from the Mahekodo-teri gardens while they worked at their new gardens, sending men back for more as these ran short. As soon as one of the new gardens was producing, they moved away from the Mahekodo-teri. The second garden was completed after their move, and the Monou-teri separated from Kąbowä's group. This was about 1954. During the time they lived with the Mahekodo-teri, they raided the Shamatari frequently, and were raided in return. The Shamatari ambushed and killed two Mahekodo-teri on one raid, causing the Mahekodo-teri to actively prosecute the war with the Shamatari to avenge these deaths.

Kąobawä's group abondoned the new site and moved to the Orinoco River shortly after the Monou-teri separated from them. They had established a garden on the Orinoco during the time that the Monou-teri were completing their own site. In short, the garden that was made while Kąobawä and his group lived with the Mahekodo-teri was simply a vantage point that permitted the group to take leave of its protectors as soon as possible, while they established gardens in more desirable locations.

Kąobawä's group moved down the Orinoco River in 1959–1960, after having lived at the new site only five years. This move was stimulated by the appearance of a government malaria team that established a small station at the mouth of the Mavaca River. Kąobawä's group moved across the river from them in order to be in a position to obtain steel tools from the newly arrived foreigners. Kąobawä's group fissioned again in the process of this move; the Lower Bisaasi-teri established a separate garden and built their own village just across the Mavaca River from Kąobawä's group. The fission was not complete, however, as both sections of Bisaasi-teri built a common village that they occupied during the dry season, when they conducted their feasts and went on raiding parties.

Kąobawä's group made contacts with a large Shamatari village, Paruritawä-teri, shortly after having moved to the mouth of the Mavaca River in 1959–1960. This village had fissioned from one of the Shamatari groups that participated in the treacherous feast in 1950 and was on semifriendly terms with it. Thus, Kąobawä and his group saw an opportunity to get revenge on their archenemies. They cultivated an alliance with the Paruritawä-teri and succeeded in getting them to participate in a treacherous feast. The Paruritawä-teri themselves were fissioning into two groups, so they made two new gardens southwest of Kąobawä's village in preparation for the treacherous feast. The feast invitation was sent (1960) to the unsuspecting Shamatari by the Paruritawä-teri. But many of them were sick, and only five men and four women ultimately came to the treacherous feast at Paruritawä-teri. Kąobawä and his followers, as well as the Monou-teri, secreted themselves outside the village while the Paruritawä-teri entertained the hapless guests inside. They managed to kill three of the five men and seized all of the women. The Paruritawä-teri abandoned their garden, anticipating the inevitable revenge raids and moved to the two new sites, fissioning into two groups of about 95 people.

This treacherous feast put the Paruritawä-teri in a very poor position. They were (and are) the westernmost Yąnomamö in the area, and their closest neighbors were the

[16] James Barker informed me of the schedule followed by Kąobawä and his group.

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Other status differences do exist and account for some variation in the activities of particular individuals. Rerebawä, for example, is an outsider to Kąobawä's group and has no intention of joining the village as a permanent resident. Consequently, he does not participate in the gardening activities and has considerably more spare time than other married men. He spends this time hunting for his wife and her parents, one of his obligations as a son-in-law. He is quite dependent on them for the bulk of his diet because they provide him with all his plantains. This is perhaps why he takes his hunting obligations so seriously and gives his game away so unflinchingly. He is quick to make reference to his hunting skills and generosity, perhaps to draw attention away from the fact that he does not cultivate food for his wife and children. He has been able to avoid making a garden because of his status as an outsider; he plans to return to his own village as soon as his bride service is over. But his in-laws want him to stay permanently so that he will be able to provide them with meat and garden produce when they are old. They have no sons to do this for them and have even promised Rerebawä their second daughter on the condition that he remain permanently in the village. They prevent Rerebawä from taking his wife and children home by keeping at least one of the children with them when Rerebawä goes to visit his own family. They know that his wife could not bear to be separated permanently from her child, and Rerebawä invariably brings her back home so that she can be with the child.

By Yąnomamö standards he has done enough bride service and deserves to be given his wife. Also, by their standards he has lived in the village so long that he should be obliged to make his own garden. But he can legitimately refuse to do this because he has discharged his obligations well beyond what was expected of him.

Kąobawä, on the other hand, has the special status of being his group's headman. Apart from this, he is also some fifteen years senior to Rerebawä and has a higher sense of obligation and responsibility to his family. Rerebawä, in addition to refusing to make a garden, thinks nothing of taking a week-long trip to visit friends, leaving his wife and children with her parents. His attitude toward the children, compared to Kąobawä's, is rather indifferent. Kąobawä had planned to accompany me to Caracas to see how foreigners live until Ariwari began crying and appealed to his father's paternal sensitivities. Kąobawä stepped out of the canoe, took off the clothing I had loaned him, and picked up Ariwari; "I can't go with you," he explained, "Ariwari will miss me and be sad."

Kąobawä thinks for the others in the village, many of whom are not able to perceive some of the less obvious implications of situations. In political matters he is the most astute man in group, but he so diplomatically exercises his influence that the others are not offended. Should someone be planning to do something that is potentially dangerous, he simply points out the danger and adds parenthetically, "Go ahead and do it if you want to, but don't expect sympathy from me if you get hurt." Shararaiwä, his youngest brother, planned to take a trip to a distant village with me. I knew that the two villages were not on particularly good terms with each other, but they were not actively at war. Kąobawä arrived at my canoe just as we were about to depart and asked me not to take Shararaiwä along, explaining that the Iyawei-teri might possibly molest him and precipitate hostilities between the two groups. Shararaiwä was willing to take a chance that my presence would be sufficient to deter any potential trouble, but Kąobawä would not risk it.

On another occasion a group of men from Patanowä-teri arrived to explore with

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*628 interdependency. The Yąnomamö cannot simply arrive at the village of a potential ally and declare that they need military assistance because of the raids of a superior enemy. Doing so would admit vulnerability and perhaps invite predation from the potential ally. Instead, they conceal and subsume the true motive for the alliance in the vehicles [438] of *trading* and *feasting*, developing these institutions over months and even years. In this [574] manner they retain an apparent modicum of sovereignty and pride, while simultaneously attaining the true objectives: intervillage solidarity and military interdependence.

*628 Three distinct features of Yąnomamö trading practices are important in the context 438 of alliance formation. First, each item must be repaid with a different kind of item: The 574 recipient is under an *obligation* to repay his partner in a type of exchange called *no mraiba*. [437] Secondly, the payment is delayed, a temporal factor in the trading techniques that is likewise implied by the *no mraiba*. The consequence of these two trading features is that one trade always calls forth another and gives the members of different villages both the excuse and the opportunity to visit each other; and once the trading starts, it tends to continue, for one village in an alliance always owes the other trade goods from their last confrontation. The third significant trade feature is the peculiar specialization in the production of trade items. Each village has one or more special products that it provides to its allies. These include such items as dogs, hallucinogenic drugs (both cultivated and collected), arrow points, arrow shafts, bows, cotton yarn, cotton and vine hammocks, baskets of several varieties, clay pots, and, in the case of the several contacted villages, steel tools and aluminum pots.

This specialization in production cannot be explained in terms of the distribution of natural resources. Each village is, economically speaking, capable of self-sufficiency. [177] (The steel tools and other products from civilization constitute the major exceptions.) The explanation of the specialization must be sought, rather, in the sociological aspects of alliance formation. Trade functions as the social catalyst, the "starting mechanism," through which mutually suspicious allies are repeatedly brought together in direct confrontation. Without these frequent contacts with neighbors, alliances would be much slower in formation and would be even more unstable once formed: A prerequisite to stable alliance is repetitive visiting and feasting, and the trading mechanism serves to bring about these visits.

*628 Clay pots are a good example of the specialization in labor that characterizes 438 Yąnomamö production and trade. The Mǫmariböwei-teri (see map, Fig. 2–8) are allied 323 to both Kąobawä's group and the people of a distant Shamatari village, the latter being mortal enemies of Kąobawä. When I first began my fieldwork, I visited the Mǫmari- [114] böwei-teri, specifically asking them if they knew how to make clay pots. They all vigor- [124] ously denied knowledge of pot-making, explaining that they once knew how to make them but had long since forgotten. They explained that their allies, the Möwaraoba-teri, made them in quantities and provided all they needed, and therefore they did not have to make them anymore. They also added that the clay in the area of their village was not of the proper type for making pots. Later in the year their alliance with the pot makers grew cool because of a war, and their source of pots was shut off. At the same time, Kąobawä's group began asking them for clay pots. The Mǫmariböwei-teri promptly responded by "remembering" how pots were made and "discovering" that the clay in their neighborhood was indeed suitable for pot manufacturing. They had merely created

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undertake it if it meant getting rid of their first group of visitors, who, by this time, had spent nearly a week eating Kąobawä's produce.

On the morning of the feast three large pieces of bark from the *araṇuri* tree were cut and brought to the village. These were made into troughs to contain the boiled, ripe plantain soup. All day long Kąobawä's younger brothers, who had returned from the hunt the day before, labored at cooking the enormous quantity of ripe plantains, pouring each boiling containerful into the trough as it was prepared.[3]

The plantains that Kąobawä had hung in his *thabono* roof a week before were now ripe. The young men who were preparing the soup would cut the bunches of plantains from the roof, split each fruit with their thumb, throw the two halves of the flesh into a cooking pot, and toss the skins onto a pile. They worked at this task from early morning until late afternoon, in addition to boiling a nearly equal quantity of green plantains, which provided the green vegetable food that customarily accompanies the presentation of meat. Yąnomamö etiquette dictates that meat must be accompanied by vegetable food and vice versa.[4] It is an insult, for example, to offer someone meat without simultaneously offering a vegetable food with it. Peeling green plantains is a little more difficult than peeling ripe ones, which are very tough and brittle. The Yąnomamö solve this problem, like they solve so many others, by using their teeth. Each plantain is bitten along its length several times, cracking the peel, which in turn is removed with the fingernails and further application of the dentition. On this particular occasion, two young men peeled, with their thumbs, enough ripe plantains to make approximately 95 gallons of soup, and, with their teeth, a sufficiently large quantity of green plantains to fill a dozen large pack-baskets.

In the morning on the day of the feast, Kąobawä went to the center of the village clearing where all could see him and proceeded to pull weeds. The clearing has to look presentable to the visitors, as it functions as the dancing plaza. As noted before, since Yąnomamö headmen cannot directly order their followers to execute tasks such as these, they usually initiate them and hope that others will follow. By and by, a number of older men joined him, as well as a few women, and when a sufficient number of workers were pulling weeds and hauling them out, Kąobawä quietly retired to his hammock, from which he oversaw the food preparations and calculated the distribution of meat.

Excitement in the village grew conspicuously as the hours passed, and by noon there was a constant din of laughter and chatter, punctuated now and then with a shrill scream from some young man overcome with the thrill of the feast. Occasionally, the visitors would reply to the shouts, setting off a brief contest of screaming between hosts

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[3]Kąobawä's group has access to aluminum pots now and uses them extensively in food preparations. Most Yąnomamö groups still use crude clay pots, although these are being rapidly replaced by aluminum ware, which is traded inland to the more remote villages.

[4]The three vegetable foods considered to be suitable accompaniments for the meat presentation are: boiled green plantains, boiled *ռaռa* fruit, and cassava bread. A number of missionaries and a few scientific observers have identified the Yąnomamö feast strongly with the *ռaռa* fruit (Zerries 1955; de Barandiaran 1966). If it is to be identified with any food, it should be called the "plantain feast," but to identify the feast with a food that sometimes (*ռaռa*) or invariably (plantains) accompanies it is to overlook the sociopolitical causes of the feast. *Ռaռa* is so unnecessary to the feast that it was served at only two of six feasts I attended. In short, the Yąnomamö feast is a social and political event, not a harvest ceremony, and occurs independently of the abundance or availability of *ռaռa* fruit. *Ռaռa* fruit ripens in February, the peak of the dry season. It is only in the dry season that feasts can be held, because travel is difficult or impossible at other times of the year. The correlation of the ripening of *ռaռa* and feasting is rather more fortuitous than causal.

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original cause being quite irrelevant. Each of the principals in the dispute busily recruited aid from their allies. Kąobawä's group sent a delegation of young men to the village that took the woman away from the cruel husband.

When the cruel husband's incensed group and their allies arrived, about a week after the challenge, they entered their opponent's village and drove them out in a hail of spears. Many of them were wounded superficially, but one old man, not able to dodge missiles as well as he used to, suffered a bad wound and subsequently died. The victors stole all the hammocks, machetes, and cooking pots they could find and fled. The losers regrouped and gave chase, this time intending to escalate the fight to shooting. Some of them tied pieces of steel to their spears to make them more effective.

They caught up to the victorious group and another spear fight took place. This time tempers grew hot because one man in each of the fighting groups had managed to borrow a shotgun from the missionaries associated with the respective villages; these were repeatedly discharged over the heads of the fighters. The Yąnomamö had deceived the missionaries into loaning them two guns on the pretext of getting fresh game for the mission personnel. One of the shotgun-wielding Indians, standing at the front of his group, was struck by two sharpened spears. At this, he discharged his shotgun into the face of the headman of the other group, terminating the fight. The wounded man nearly died from the blast, but after many months of nursing by the missionaries he managed to recover. He still carries several balls of lead in his face.[1] Thereafter, the two groups were at war and raided each other with the intention of killing.

The Raid and Nomohoni

The raid is the next level in the scale of violence; this is warfare proper. The objective of the raid is to kill one or more of the enemy and flee without being discovered. If, however, the victims of the raid discover their assailants and manage to kill one of them, the campaign is not considered to be a success, no matter how many people the raiders may have killed before sustaining their single loss. Rerebawä told me of a raid he went on several years before I arrived. They managed to kill the headman of the village they raided, abduct his small son, and kill one more man as he fled to the village to recruit help. They were chased, but kept ahead of their pursuers for almost two days. Their pursuers caught up with them after dark on the second day and attacked them while they slept. They killed one man in his hammock, but in so doing, alarmed the others. A skirmish between the two groups developed, and the raiders managed to kill two more of their enemy in this struggle. Still, according to Rerebawä, the raid was not a good one because one of their own men was killed. The son of the slain headman was later shot by Torokoiwä, who presently lives in Monou-teri. The little boy was persecuted and tormented by the other children. Finally, Torokoiwä got sick of seeing this, so he shot the little boy as he was bathing in the stream.

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[1] The members of two villages in contact with the missions occasionally borrow shotguns from the missionaries. The missionaries are very cautious about loaning the Yąnomamö firearms, knowing that these would be used in the wars. Shotguns are beginning to be rather common in Brazilian Yąnomamö villages, as the Indians there now have opportunities to make contacts with settlers and backwoodsmen and do not have to rely on missionaries for these weapons. This, however, is a recent development. Brazilian Yąnomamö, armed with these shotguns, have raided into Venezuela against villages that have not yet had any contact with outsiders.